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THE GATHERED LILY



AND OTHER POEMS



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THE GATHERED LILY.





THE  
GATHERED LILY

And other Poems.

BY

MARY ROSSITER.



S. W. PARTRIDGE AND CO.,  
9, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1873.

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## P O E M S.



### THE GATHERED LILY.

MISTS from the heath-crown'd moorland  
Drifting adown the vale ;  
Slowly they glide from the hill's rough side,  
Wraith-like, and weird, and pale,  
And crouch low down in the meadows,  
While breezes over them wail.

Clouds, all scatter'd and drifting ;  
Streamers of red on high ;  
As if mailed hands had snatch'd up brands  
In their madd'ning revelry,  
And dash'd them on to the floating clouds  
To quench them there, and die.

A low, low moan on the steep bank,  
A moan from the sea to the land ;  
With passionate sighs, and soft replies,  
Like lovers, claspt hand in hand,  
They are waiting the tide's swift ebbing  
To break the entrancing band.

Rich green meads, where the primrose  
And golden cowslip glow ;  
From side to side, with turn and glide,  
A dozen rivulets flow ;  
Like a tangled net some fairy cast down  
To prison the flowers below.

A cottage quietly nestling  
To the side of a wooded hill,  
Where day after day the great wheels play  
Of the ever-busy mill,  
And churn into foam the waters  
Of the merry mountain rill.

Twilight, and shadows descending  
Here in a little room,  
And the sun's last rays from the jasmine sprays,

Kissing out sweet perfume,  
And darting arrowy flashes  
In and out through the gloom.

There, 'neath the snowy drap'ry,  
A maiden lies asleep—  
So the sea-bird rests on the wavelet's breast,  
Or a lily-flow'r on the deep,  
Or a snow-wreath ling'ring lightly  
On the side of a mountain steep.

Slumbers ever so fitful,  
Broken with starts and cries,  
And now she sighs deep in her restless sleep ;  
And now she has open'd her eyes,  
And questions with feverish haste the dame,  
Who soothes her with soft replies.

"Go ! look at the clock, dearest mother !  
Surely 'tis time he should come !  
For the mill is still, and over the hill  
I've watch'd the men go home ;  
And the sun is setting slowly—  
Oh ! surely he promised to come ?

“ Perhaps he is ling’ring to gather  
The flowers that I love so well ;  
For thickly they grow on the way you know,  
And down in the fairy dell—  
The white and purple violets,  
And delicate blue harebell.

“ Mother ! I hear him coming !  
Quick ! smooth out my tangled hair ;  
And raise me, that I may see him pass by,  
And, mother ! just place a chair,  
I can talk with him best, and hear him,  
If you’ll only place it there.

“ And, mother ! he praised last Sunday  
My ribbons of pale sky-blue.  
But, why do you weep in silence deep ?  
Am I dreaming ? It *must* be true !  
And what is this pain in heart and head,  
Racking me through and through ?

“ Wasn’t it Sunday he praised them ?—  
I’m very forgetful to day !—  
But I mind me now, it was long ago

When he picked me the branch of May—  
And—he loves me no more, I remember—  
And, mother!—I think I'll pray.

“ Right, mother! right! I was dreaming,  
I'm very feeble to-day:  
Come near, mother! near, for you've much to hear  
Ere you go to your sleep away:  
I think I can tell it you best in the gloom,  
For I've much that is sad to say.

“ Is it long, long ago, dear mother?  
It seems *very* long ago,  
That our fair cousin Nell, called the Village Belle,  
Was lost in the drifting snow;  
And Edward—*my* Edward, then—alas!  
Was the first to find her, you know.

“ Oh, why did she not die, mother!  
Die 'mid the snow-flowers there?  
But he bore her along in his arms so strong,  
And, oh, she was wondrously fair,  
As she lifted her soft blue eyes to his,  
And bless'd him for his care.

"And after that, in the evening,  
How often she came to sew !  
It chanced always to be at the time when he  
Was coming to see me, you know.  
And there she would sit with her golden curls,  
And her beautiful head bent low.

"And I'd see him gazing upon her,  
E'en when he talked to me ;  
And the sweet surprise gleam'd out of her eyes,  
If she'd raise them up and see  
The love that was drifting towards her,  
And ebbing away from me.

"So the spring brought again the blossoms,  
And loosen'd the frozen stream ;  
And then there fell on my heart hope's knell,  
And I woke from my happy dream ;  
For—he loved me no more ! I could not doubt,  
It was plain as the noonday beam.

"But still in my walks he was by my side,  
Though *she* was there now, too ;  
And again by the well in the fairy dell

He gather'd the violets blue—  
Only, her flowers were fresh each day,  
And mine were scant and few.

“She shunn'd me now, when I met her,  
And he would turn aside ;  
And I would not tease where I could not please,  
So, away again would glide ;  
I loved him, mother, far too well  
To upbraid him, or deride.

“But, 'twas bitter ! bitter ! to sit apart,  
Apart in the shade and mist  
(They side by side in the eventide),  
And their low sweet words to list ;  
Or to turn just in time to see her hand  
In passionate rapture kist.

“'Twas bitter ! bitter ! weeping all night,  
And forcing my spirits all day ;  
'Twas bitter to smile when my heart the while  
Was heavy and cold as clay ;  
And striving to hunt dark thoughts from my breast,  
That, spite of my efforts, would stay.

“ ‘Twas bitter ! bitter ! to see her pass  
In her beauty and her pride ;  
And know that as soon as the harvest-moon  
Should shine, she’d be his bride ;  
While I—ah ! I long’d to lie in the grave,  
By our little Katie’s side.

“ And often I pray’d through the long, long night,  
With the moonlight streaming above,  
That whate’er my fate, I might never hate,  
But love with a sister’s love—  
For he could not help it, mother dear !  
Men’s hearts will always rove.

“ And I prayed to love her, mother, too,  
Through many a weary day,  
But often ere I had ended the pray’r  
It would die in loud sabbings away ;  
And a hundred plans of vengeance unform’d  
Would through my weak brain play.

“ Then came this withering sickness on,  
And my spirit flutter’d low,  
With drooping wing, that can never spring

Again to the sunbeams' glow ;  
Only, when death breaks these bands of clay,  
I shall soar still higher, you know.

" I feel I am dying, dear mother,—  
I am young in years to die,  
But hopes and fears, and deeds—not years,  
Is what life should be measured by ;  
No matter if crowded and crushed into days,  
Or drawn out through a century.

" Oh, mother ! the shadows are deep'ning,—  
Shadows you cannot see ;  
But the Light so meet doth guide my feet,  
And an Arm sustaineth me ;  
And the ' Peace be still,' that calm'd the storm,  
Hath bidden my terrors flee.

" Mother dear ! tell it him gently,  
That I have pass'd away ;  
Tell him that brief was my agonised grief,  
That I loved him, and bless'd him alway :  
And—give my blessing to Nellie—  
Thank God ! I *can* bless her to-day.

"Go now, and bring me the flowers,  
The last that he gather'd for me  
(They are folded away with the branch of May);  
For I want to touch them, and see;  
And when I am dead, lay them up in my shroud,  
Where my clay-cold heart will be.

"Now kiss me, mother! and hold me  
Once more to your passionate heart—  
Once more let me rest on that faithful breast,  
Before on my journey I start.  
So! let me slumber from death into life,  
And you'll scarcely feel me depart."

Sunrise, and morning descending  
Into that little room;  
And the sun's first rays from the jasmine sprays  
Kissing out sweet perfume:  
And the gather'd lily, all bathed in light,  
And the branch whence 'twas sever'd, in gloom.

## SONG.

YES, sing to me ! but let the song be sweet  
 As the low lullaby that midnight sings  
 To soothe the earth, when every star full fleet,  
 To form night's tiara, unbidden springs ;  
 And from the earth goes upward  
 Chants of countless things.

Yes, sing to me ! but not as you would sing  
 Amid the glitter of a worldly throng ;  
 I want nor joy, nor revelry, to ring  
 One note of merriment amid thy song ;  
 But, like a stream at noonday,  
 Let it flow along.

Yes, sing to me ! my heart is throbbing wild  
 With the low gush of melodies gone by ;  
 And hopes, and dreams, but cherish'd when a child,  
 Like the swift rush of angels' wings, come nigh ;  
 And thoughts, like flowers that slumber'd,  
 Waken as I sigh.

## MIND *versus* MATTER.

"COME I" said great Jove, as he sat in state  
 On Olympus-top, "let us shape the fate  
     Of this mortal, who fain would be,  
 In his mad ambition, a demigod,  
 Heedless how much we must trample the clod,  
 And tear up the brambles that cumber the sod,  
     And bind up what erst was free.

"Heedless, what lopping and tearing away,  
 What sifting from drosses, and purging from clay,  
     Ere the work can well be done.  
 How can an atom so frail, and weak,  
 In his pride, and his blindness, eagerly seek  
 For the fiery trial we needs must wreak,  
     Ere his godhead can be won !

"Better for him that he crawl in the dust,  
 A blind-worm, with worms ; or, if mount he must,  
     To wait till his wings unfold ;

Than struggle and writhe, in torture and pain,  
Through the clogging mire of that outstretch'd plain,  
With the burning heat in his reeling brain,  
And his spirit quench'd and cold ;

“ To rise to the *mole-hill* above his kind,  
With a stricken form, and a shatter'd mind,  
And a soul bow'd down with woe.  
Yet if so he wills it to stand apart,  
And scorneth the ordeal and fiery smart,  
Be it so ! we will model his head and his heart,  
But we fain would bid him go :

“ Go, where the valley is thick with corn,  
Where the rich fruit traileth over the thorn,  
And the honey and wine flow free ;  
And live with his fellows in calm content  
On the choice, free gifts, that we gods have sent,  
And look back at last on a life well spent—  
But he will not let it be.”

In vain, ye gods ! in vain ! in vain !  
The lily may fall 'neath the pelting rain,  
The gourd wither up 'neath the sun ;

But the mountain pine hails the tempest's pow'r  
Which shall scatter its wing'd seeds abroad in a  
show'r,  
And it strikes its roots deeper, and higher will tow'r,  
And rejoice in the struggle begun.

So he who is lit with a glorious spark  
Of heaven-kindled fire, must shine out from the  
dark,  
And be set as a beacon on high ;  
With the starlight before him, the earth-mists  
behind ;  
Deep darkness around him, white light in his  
mind,  
And his heart with the triple virtues twined,  
To poize it surely by.

And what to him is the teeming vale,  
Where the corn waves ripe, and the rich vines trail ;  
Should he batten there, and die ?  
No ! no, great Jove ! O'er the spark let fall  
In a soul like that ye can spread no pall,  
It must steadily mount in a flame so tall,  
Till it leaps from the earth to the sky.

Let the reptile crawl, and the mole dig deep,  
And the blind-worm over the grey clods creep ;  
But the eagle must mount to the sun ;  
Nor heed, tho' the lightning be on his track,  
Tho' the tempests struggle to keep him back,  
There is that within which no power can slack  
Till his upward course be done.

---

## LOVE AND MEMORY.

Oh, golden days ! oh, days so fair !  
Days of my love and youth ! ye were  
A loosen'd string of gems, that brake,  
And breaking, roll'd in light around ;  
Which ere an eager hand could take,  
The iron heel of time had ground ;  
Ground into dust, so fine and sweet,  
It clung to memory's ling'ring feet ;  
She, turning, on that lonely strand,  
Scoop'd in the hollow of her hand  
The scatter'd atoms sighs had blown

Around the rocks where flowers had grown,  
And placed it on her temple shrine,  
High up, above grief's dashing brine ;  
And in the crystal dome above  
She set the steadfast lamp of love.  
Ah ! beating round that crystal dome,  
On restless wing my soul must roam,  
Till faint with passionate desire,  
It sinks amid the cruel fire.

---

LIVE IT DOWN !

Is there any shadow cast  
On thy renown ?  
Thou canst make it of the past—  
Live it down !  
In the warmth of kindly deeds,  
In the work for mighty needs—  
Live it down !

Is there blight upon thy life ?  
Doth fortune frown ?

Is there discord, turmoil, strife ?

Live it down !

Is there tarnish on thy fame ?

Is there slander on thy name ?

Live it down !

Hath falsehood's blatant voice

Raised the town ?

Hath hatred bade rejoice ?

Live it down !

Hath cruelty, or scorn

Left thee desolate and lorn ?

Live it down !

Are they fading—pleasures' flowers—

From thy crown ?

Hath thy mem'ry haunted bowers ?

Live it down !

Is thy heart by passion toss'd ?

Is thy soul's ambition cross'd ?

Live it down !

Why should lethargy's fell snares

Hold thee down ?

(There *is* vict'ry for who dares,)

Live it down !

Front the sorrow ! quit the sin !

Fight and conquer ! run and win !

Be the woe without, within—

Live it down !

---

### THINK OF ME !

WHEN on their golden cars night's stars are  
keeping

Watch o'er the slumb'ring sea ;

And in deep forest bow'rs night-dews are weeping,  
Oh, think of me !

When over May-flow'r sunbeams glint and glitter,  
Chasing the bird and bee ;

And 'mid the apple-blooms young nestlings twitter,  
Oh, think of me !

When in thine ear love's dulcet tones are sounding,  
Bidding all sorrow flee ;

When with triumphant hope thy heart is bounding,  
Oh ! think of me !

Where'er thou art—in sunshine or in shower,  
In misery or glee ;  
Whate'er thy destiny, whate'er thy dower,  
Oh, think of me !

---

## ANTI-MONASTIC.

PUT all this superstition by,  
Into its tomb of ages past ;  
Since death had slowly closed its eyes,  
Why raise the corpse 'neath clearer skies,  
To sicken us at last ?

Is this the work we're given to do ?  
To hurry from the world afar  
Regardless of each social band ;  
'Gainst cry of love, of kin, of land,  
To raise an iron bar ?

Is this our work ? to bruise, and crush,  
And wrench from perfect curve and line ;  
And dare our impious hands of clay  
Around God's noblest work to lay,  
And mar the man divine ?

To warp His work who call'd it "Good!"  
For every destined end and use :  
To hack, maim, scourge, the flesh He bless'd,  
And perfected in perfect rest—  
To load it with abuse.

To set an image in man's place,  
A trick'd out thing, nor live nor dead ;  
Nor ape nor fiend ; nor man nor god ;  
A puppet, ruled by others' nod,  
Denied a heart and head.

A thing whence all is gone of man  
As God first made him—good and fair—  
Instead, a cringing coward, slave  
To superstition ; or a knave  
Perchance, is lurking there.

Out on such ! shame that men can thus  
    Give up identity and will,  
And freedom's self, and word, and deed,  
And conscience, for the wretched meed  
    Of acting puppets ill.

Come forth ! from convent's murky cell ;  
    Come forth ! to God's free earth and air ;  
The scroll unfurl'd by nature scan,  
Lift bold free fronts to heaven, for man  
    Is *noblest* written there.

Out, on the monkish legends weird !  
    Inaction vile, and dronish life.  
Man is the image of his God ;  
God in man's image earth has trod,  
    And conquer'd in all strife.

Come forth ! from gloomy convent cell ;  
    Lay hand to plough ; bend limbs to toil ;  
Delve, dig, and plant, and sow and reap,  
Forget the scourge, forget to weep ;  
    And till the heart and soil.

Learn, there is wisdom deeper far  
Than aught that monkish lore can tell :  
The lowliest heart this truth can prove  
If it but teach ye how to love,  
If ye but learn it well.

Spread out your wither'd hearts 'neath heaven,  
Till wet with honey-dews of love  
They bud, and blush, in ruddy bloom.  
Seek through the sunshine and the gloom  
The deeper, truer love.

The deeper love, the truer love,  
The *human* love, that hath its root  
Twined core-deep in this earth of ours,  
Rearing above it leaves and flowers,  
And heavenward, rich, red fruit.

Ay ! leaves, and flowers, and tendrils too,  
Earth-borne, earth-nurtured, earth-sustain'd ;  
The pulsing life with throbbing beat—  
The fiery juices' quiv'ring heat—  
The colours—earth-engrain'd.

Ay ! earth-engrain'd, earth-won, and yet,  
    Fann'd and refresh'd by Heaven's free breath,  
By heaven's rich chrism, by manna-dew,  
Anointed, strengthen'd thro' and thro',  
    To give the lie to death.

The purer love, the truer love,  
    Though bursting from the earth's green sod,  
Drawn on by sun, and shower, to climb  
On, upward, o'er the walls of time,  
    To wreath the throne of God.

---

## MY LOVE'S GRAVE.

WHERE have they lain my love  
    With lilies crown'd ?  
The daisied turf above  
    Of some humble mound,  
Unmark'd by a simple cross, or a sculptured stone,  
How shall that show me the grave of my love, my  
own ?

How did she die? and where?  
Is the record kept  
That her heart was broken with care,  
That she mourn'd and wept?  
That a traitor love, somewhere, made holiday  
Mid revel, and madness of mirth, while she faded  
away?

Where have they lain my love?  
Of the passers-by,  
Of the cloud, of the carrier-dove,  
Of the winds that fly,  
Of the wand'ring waves, return'd from a distant  
shore,  
I have pleaded in vain; the reply comes never-  
more.

Where have they lain thee, sweet?  
Only to kneel, and shed  
Tears of despair at thy feet,  
Tears of mad love at thy head:  
Only to press the kind earth, that was kinder than  
love,  
Hushing thee up in her breast, and smiling above;

Smiling in tender flow'rs  
And trailing wreath—  
Only to dream for hours  
O'er my love! beneath,  
And to lie down wearied at length, is all that I ask,  
To die on her grave, and go to my love, at last !

---

## ONLY.

ONLY a wither'd flower  
In a faded letter lying ;  
Only a bloom from a bower  
Where the wind may still be sighing ;  
But oh ! 'twas a spotless lily fair,  
When loved hands pluck'd it, and placed it there;  
Now—lily and love are dying.

Only a ringlet of hair  
In a tarnish'd locket hiding,  
With the hint of a lover's care  
In its golden threads abiding ;

But oh! with what tender thought it was shred  
For the poet's love, from the poet's head ;  
And alas ! for the sure dividing.

Only a dying dream  
The matin bells are knelling :  
Only a bright moonbeam  
The day-dawn is dispelling ;  
But soft was the vision, and hallow'd the light,  
And hateful the waking to unclouded sight,  
And bitter and long the rebelling.

Only a harp's rich strain  
Into scatter'd cadences breaking ;  
Only joy's wild refrain  
A sadder melody waking.  
Only the lights and shadows of morn,  
Definite outline, and fuller form,  
Slowly, but surely, taking.

Only a something hush'd  
In depths too deep for crying :  
Only a something crush'd  
In a heart long time a-dying.

Only a something forced to its doom  
Living ; that striveth to rend its tomb,  
While hope's farewell is sighing.

---

## TOO LATE !

Too late ! too late ! the sweet south wind comes  
sighing,  
Bringing the blessing of the quick'ning rain,  
When parch'd, and shrivell'd, 'neath cold clods,  
is lying  
The seed that should have yielded golden grain.

Too late ! too late ! the wand'ring star is nearing  
Where, year by year, the sage watch'd, hoped,  
and wept ;  
Too late ! too late ! the dream of its appearing  
Can haunt no more the sleep he long has slept.

Too late ! too late ! the yearn'd-for dewdrop falleth  
Upon the dry lip of the wither'd flower.

Too late ! too late ! the widow'd ringdove calleth;  
When the barb'd shaft hath pierced their bridal  
bower.

Too late ! too late ! the vine of so much tending  
Hath spread her leaves and bade her tendrils  
flow,  
Now that beneath the green fruit she is bending,  
The rip'ning summer sun hath ceased to glow.

Too late ! too late ! the blessèd light comes creeping  
Into the silent room on morning's breath,  
When the expectant eyes have ceased their weeping,  
And closed, 'mid darkness, in the sleep called  
death.

Too late ! too late ! the desert fountain, bubbling  
Up to the fever'd lip of hounded slave,  
When Jordan's tide his filming eye is troubling,  
And all his thirst is quench'd in that calm wave.

Too late ! too late ! the life-quest crown'd in finding  
The yearn'd-for treasure, when another hand  
Hath traced upon the signet and the binding,  
His right, as lord and master of the land.

Too late ! too late ! the balm of May, when blighted  
By cruel frosts the rosebud droops its head.

Too late ! too late ! the sunbeam that was slighted  
Steals back to kiss the eyelids of the dead.

Too late ! too late ! the heart long time out-crying  
With famish'd hunger gnawing at its core,  
Obtains the precious nourishment when dying,  
Only to feel what might have been before.

Too late ! too late ! the doing on the morrow  
What only were acceptable to-day.  
Too late ! too late ! remorse, regret, and sorrow,  
When anger'd love hath torn itself away.

Too late ! too late ! for warming or for healing,  
Love's kisses shower'd on lips for ever cold ;  
Or lifted looks of passionate appealing  
To eyes whose latest earthly tale is told.

Too late ! too late ! the fruitage, when the reason  
Mocks at the madness of the wishes strown ;  
And time, in rounding to a colder season,  
Teaches where other hopes had best be grown.

Too late ! too late ! for love to yield to duty,  
When passion-pangs have ev'ry bound'ry burst.  
Too late ! too late ! the visions of lost beauty  
Seen o'er the yawning gulf by souls accurst.

---

## WAITING.

WAITING ? Yes ; down in the summer mead,  
In a halo of light from the setting sun ;  
And her robe with a fringe of golden dust  
From the flowers it has trail'd o'er, won.  
With a flush of joy on her delicate cheek,  
And a tender light in her sweet blue eyes,  
And a flutter of lace at her snowy neck,  
Not caused by the wind's low sighs ;  
And the ripple of sunny tresses, blown  
From forehead and eyes that will soon be press'd  
Into rosy bloom by his greeting kiss,  
As he folds her with joy to his breast ;  
And vows that no power under heaven's blue skies  
Shall e'er sever the bond of their tender ties.

Waiting? Yes; waiting once again,  
But now in a carefully darken'd room,  
Where fond ones whisper, and silently glide  
With muffled steps through the gloom.  
White as snow is the sweet young face,  
Save where the fever-spots burn red;  
And dull and dank is the once bright hair  
That ripples still round her head.  
The bright eyes restlessly roam around,  
And the parch'd lips murmur for ever the moan,  
“Is he coming? I’m weary! but cannot rest  
Till he calls me again, his own.”  
And *he*?—is where beauty and folly meet,  
With his false heart laid at another’s feet.

Waiting? Yes; now in the silent grave,  
With snowdrop flowers in her shroud-folds white,  
And the cold hard sods above her spread,  
Glist’ning with snow-flakes bright.  
The moan sobb’d out from her pale, mute lips,  
And her fix’d white face so calm and hush’d;  
The vein’d lids resting o’er weary eyes,  
Whence the last sad tears have gush’d.  
Her heart still’d now under folded hands,

While the soul *he* spurn'd, and carelessly trod,  
Is rushing up, where its anguish-cry  
Had gone before—to God !  
Beautiful spirit ! soar on to His throne,  
Where infinite Love shall absorb thine own.

---

## THE BROKEN BELL.

SAD was the tone, and low,  
In which it bade the old year go ;  
Its knell, like frozen rain,  
Smote hearts with throbs of pain.

Sweet was the voice, and clear,  
With which it hail'd the bright new year ;  
Under the silvery showers  
Hearts bloom'd with hope's gay flowers.

Rude hands by lawless spell,  
Clanged discord from the bell.

Then was the sweet-voiced spirit heavenward  
driven,  
Since passion-pangs its earth-poised dome had  
riven.

---

## TWIN SOULS.

Loose from the finite time's grip ;  
Earth from ocean's clasp sever ;  
But the soul from the twin of its soul  
Is loosed—Never !

Fathoms of suff'ring between ;  
Depths of anguish unmeasured ;  
Anger, and passion, and scorn,  
Madly treasured.

Words that bite through the heart's core ;  
Mists of coldness enshrouding ;  
Distrust, faith's wavering eye  
Darkly clouding.

All, all as nought ! cleaving close,  
In undying bands ever,  
Is the soul that is twin unto soul,  
And loosed—Never !

'Twixt them the fiery plain stretch,  
By the desert sand bounded ;  
Yawning abysses ope wide—  
Depths unsounded.

Worlds intervening ; life quench'd  
In death's passionless river ;  
Heart torn from heart, coldly left  
Lone to shiver.

All as nought ! time, space, coldness, and death,  
Love and passion *may* sever,  
But the soul that is twin unto soul  
Is loosed—Never !

Together ! 'mid agony's pangs,  
Or joy's ecstasy circles ;  
Where the storm of the battle of life  
Madly hurtles.

Together ! together for aye !  
Heaven nor hell cannot sever  
The soul from the twin of its soul ;  
Never ! never !

---

" NOTHING IS LOST."

NOTHING is lost ! the glitt'ring drop  
An angel's wing in rapid flight  
Sweeps from a cloud, down sinking falls  
Low in the earth, and lost to sight ;  
Next morn, behold ! it trembling glows  
A brilliant gem within the rose.

The tangled weed that fouling hoofs  
Deep trample in the reeking mire,  
With matted herb, and mouldy leaves,  
With rotting fruit, and trailing bri'r,  
May be, in some not distant spring,  
The life that feeds the forest-king.

The sullied stream, that foul and black,  
Goes murmuring on with foetid breath,

Slow sinking in the earth at last,  
Cursed, as the source of death ;  
In yonder vale, behold it mount,  
A crystal, pure, life-giving fount.

The wand’ring beam of solar light  
Seeking the water-lily’s breast,  
And crush’d, *we* think, to death, as folds  
That lily to its rest ;  
Ages hereafter wakes to mirth,  
In flames upon some blazing hearth.

Nothing is lost ! the burning tear  
Soft pity wrings from beauty’s eyes  
May, ere that earthly day is done,  
Gleam out a gem in paradise ;  
Or, ’mid the gloom of tempests dark,  
Help to reflect the rainbow’s arc.

Stamp’d in the mire of ages past,  
With perfect form, are weed and fern ;  
Not lost, e’en these, but garner’d up,  
And science turns to them to learn—  
Nay, more—to track, and trail, and tread,  
Of beasts whose very names are dead.

If such as these, we count as mean,  
Be garner'd up from age to age,  
And e'en the slime of cent'ries past  
Be close enwritten as a page ;  
Shall noble passions God has lent  
To man, on aching void be spent ?

Nay, never ! on the unsullied blank  
The sun-limn'd pictures brightly grow,  
And in their startling truthfulness  
Mock man's most labour'd show.  
What then ! if truth—heaven's higher sun—  
Should stamp in air all said and done ?

Why not ? The ocean garners up  
From age to age its histories ;  
Nothing that sinks within its depths  
Is lost from out its mysteries,  
Of hate or love, of joy or pain ;  
All kept, to be upheaved again.

Why not ? The dust we careless tread,  
Or watch in eddying whirls sweep by,  
Is pregnant with the life of that  
Whose home shall be beyond the sky.

It waits but for the trumpet sounds,  
To form itself to human bounds.

That, too, is then a gathering book,  
In which, in numbers yet unread,  
Is treasured from the world's broad field  
The records of the mighty dead :  
Though writ in dust, though bound in sod,  
It shall be read to man by God.

What then ! if in the outspread air,  
Which fold on fold enwraps the earth,  
Our guardian angels record fair  
Each deed, each word, each thought from birth ?  
What ! if at last this blazon'd scroll  
Be manifested to each soul ?

Oh, horrible the thought ! to find  
Traced there, in characters of fire,  
The perfect reflex of each heart,  
Each hate, each love, each mad desire !  
Nothing is lost ! that given to air  
Must still be treasured—why not there ?

## SONG.

You bid me sing ! and I would fain  
E'en with thy slightest wish comply ;  
But oh ! the lay will feeble be  
As summer evening's last, low sigh.  
For o'er my soul a shadow steals,  
And crushes out the sunshine bright ;  
While joys and hopes, once rainbow-dyed,  
Are passing, passing, with the light.

You bid me sing ! the pent-up stream,  
That chafes to pass its barrier o'er,  
Gives to the woods its wildest strain  
When rushing by, to come no more.  
The wild swan down the rapid tide,  
To her own death-dirge floats along ;  
So on thy heart my dying breath  
Should ebb away in tender song.

## FLOWERS.

BRING me bright flowers ; I pine  
For the fresh dewy sweetness of young flow'rs,  
    Such as in olden time  
I gather'd in the forest's haunted bow'rs.  
Pillow my weary head  
Upon their sunny glow, that I may sleep,  
    Dreaming all grief hath fled,  
All the wild mis'ry past which now I weep.

Gather fresh flowers, and twine  
Around my brow the incense-breathing wreath ;  
    Press their cool lips to mine,  
And let me sip the sweets that lie beneath.  
Lay them upon my heart,  
And let them there breathe out their latest sigh ;  
    Winning its pain to part,  
Or, by their meek death, teaching it to die.

## ZOE.

An early Greek convert, who, after the martyrdom of her Christian lover, becomes frenzied, and dies.

MEN call'd me "fair," "enchantress," "syren,"  
"witch,"

Said that mine eyes were wrapt in lambent flame,  
Fusing men's hearts to nought with mad desire ;  
That, all my blue-black hair, down-sweeping, rich,  
Was wreathing snakes, that coiling closely, knit  
My prey as net of wire.

They said I mark'd my victims from afar,  
And drew them to me, as the fatal star,  
To their destruction. But 'twas false ! 'twas false !

I could have gone on heedless, self-sustain'd,  
Without the brainless ones that felt, or feign'd  
Such passion throes ;

My face was set towards the rising sun,  
And not to madmen's woes.

I never wanted them  
To fall down cowering, at my slightest gaze ;  
To cringe like beaten hounds, nor dare upraise  
Themselves to act as men.

'Twas false ! my power did not  
Delight to tear men's hearts as eagle's beak ;  
To batten on the cores as daily meat,  
And leave the husk to rot.  
Why would they come and gloat  
Their hungry, greedy, bestial eyes on me,  
If so they thought that seeing, was to be  
'Whelm'd in so dire a lot !  
One—how my soul did loathe him !—lay all faint  
And sick with love, low in the dewy grass,  
Watching to see what time my feet should pass ;  
And I, with scorn  
Did wrap my robe's long folds still closer round,  
Lest they should touch his shadow on the ground ;  
And mute, and lorn,  
With cold white lips, he kiss'd my footprints there,  
And mingling with my name an impious prayer,  
Died, ere 'twas morn.  
'Tis false ! I did not spurn  
The gentle, girl-soul'd youth who traced my step ;  
Who, loving me, did all things else forget.  
'Tis true, I did not turn,  
Nor heed his tears ; nor did I his who came  
With all the glitt'ring pageantry of fame,

With all the tinkling cymbal of high name,  
With all the arts, and grace  
Men practise in this world to trap their prey :  
I did not stop to crush him as he lay,  
With his false face !  
False as the lie that lived upon his tongue ;  
False as the fiery lays he grovelling sung ;  
I did but put him by,  
With careless power, as I would put aside  
(Ere wounded, mind you ! else he should have  
died)  
Some venomous gad-fly :  
I left him pois'ning all the circling air  
With amorous sigh.  
Why should I stay ?  
Foul carrion's good enough for jackal's prey.  
But none go conquering ever ; men bent low  
Before me, as the ripe corn to the hook ;  
But like the op'ning of a better book,  
Or like the golden glow,  
Which floods the valley ere the morn doth rise,  
Paling to spectres night's star-cluster'd eyes,  
As such my fate did show.  
My face was set, I said, to rising sun ;

And now I warm'd to it ere day begun :  
My soul sprang up and lay,  
Faint, cold, and passion-yearning, where the bleak  
And arid mountain-top rose high and steep,  
That it might catch the ray—  
The first, before earth-shiver'd. O ye gods !  
What have I done that I should wander thus ?  
Blind, spirit-blasted, bleeding in the dust  
Beneath your grinding chariot-wheels. What done ?  
I soar'd, as do the eaglets, to the sun ;  
The thread that drew me there your fingers spun ;  
The wound heal'd only there your arrows stung.  
Gods ! ye did bring  
This ruin on me ! I had mated, meek  
And humbly with my kind, some mortal sleek  
And well-to-do, some addle-pated wight ;  
And grown, as such do, earthward, like to like ;  
But that within  
Ye did create a yearning for the best,  
A flutt'ring, pulse-beat heavenward ; an unrest ;  
A craving for the light ; a thirst for all  
That holds soul, spirit, body, in its thrall ;  
A tide without an ebb on to my fate ;  
A taste unsatisfied, that would not sate

Itself on husks, though starving. As a god  
I saw this mortal ; as a god he tower'd  
Above the herding throng, with brows were lower'd  
The thunder storm to burst,  
In all its sweeping eloquence sublime,  
On all their vile idolatry ; all crime;  
On all the gods have curst.  
His eye search'd all my heart ; I sat and gazed,  
Low at his feet, high up to him, ablaze  
With yearnings undefined.  
His accents fell upon my greedy ear  
Like snow-flakes on the sea ;  
His words dropp'd deep, like wing'd seeds, in my  
heart,  
And there took root ;  
In time bore tender flower-wreaths round, and hung  
Rich golden fruit.  
Why should I think, while yet 'twas summer day,  
Mildew and frost would smite it to decay ?  
Wasting and death come late in autumn hours,  
Haunting the barren woods and leafless bow'rs.  
Here all was bloom ;  
Could I believe that where the joylight stream'd  
Would yawn a tomb ?

To swallow up light, flowers, fruit, joy, and love,  
In hell-born gloom !

Gods ! I do hate ye all ! hard ! cruel ! cold !  
Toying with mortals' agony, ye hold  
Our happiness, loose-tether'd to your hands,  
That we might draw it near, and nearer yet,  
Till all but claspt ; when lo ! the tighten'd bands  
Do pluck it from our grasp, and hold it high,  
A dazzling meteor, 'twixt us and the sky ;  
A blazing comet soaring ever; dire,  
Leaving a trail of passion-kindling fire,  
Pouring down blasting rays, that scorch and blight  
The shudd'ring heart and brain, till blackest night  
Whelms it in blankness.

Gods ! ye are madder than our madmen be ;  
Witness Silenus in wild revelry ;  
Witness great Pan enraged, and witness he  
The random charioteer, who set on fire  
This earth, and all but made her fun'r'al pyre.  
Gods ! what revenge like yours ? so sure ! so fell !  
Witness, O Sisyphus, from deepest hell !  
And ye, oh, Tantalus ! and Actæon !  
Arachne ! Hierax ! and Ixion !

It's not true,

Ye gods, who sit in judgment on our sin,  
That through and through  
Ye all have trail'd its varied depths within ?  
Is it not true  
Your hateful passions, unrestrain'd, have bred  
One half your crew ?  
Your heaviest curse is laid upon my head ;  
My reason totters, all my heart is dead ;  
And this did you  
Through envy, that a mortal should enslave  
The love of one to whom in wrath ye gave  
Wisdom, that grew  
Up to your stature—found it dwarfish, mean,  
And leaping o'er the heights that intervene,  
The outstretch'd view  
Taught him to scorn and mock at you, and fly  
To purer founts to slake his thirst—and I—  
I met him radiant, with his face aglow  
With sun-gleams from the source whence all lights  
flow,  
And worshipp'd him,  
Thinking him bright Apollo, or some god.  
Fool ! never god had face, or form, or trod  
The earth as this man ; nobler, nobler far !

In his humility, Christ-taught,  
In his great poverty, wealth-bought,  
In his high charity, Heaven-sought ;  
In his grand soul baptised in love, at war  
With all that brutalises man,  
With all that bows him down, and makes him scan  
The works of darkness. Oh, ye gods ! ye gods !  
Ye fought with this one man, at fearful odds,  
And lost. Dead ? Yes ! I know he's dead !  
Saw I not flick'ring flames curl o'er his head,  
And weave the martyr's crown around his brow ?  
Did ye not loose men's passions to mad flow  
To do the deed ?  
Was there not need ?  
Ay, surely ! when his thunders shook the throne  
Of Jupiter more truly than Jove's own ;  
When near Olympus high itself he stood,  
And sway'd the crowd, till in its holy mood  
It shouted, " Down with all the gods ! save one—  
The God of this good Christian, and His Son."  
Then, from the temples, tore the fruit and flow'rs,  
And from the altars in far sylvan bow'rs,  
Drave priest and offering. Truly, had ye left  
This one man living, ye had been bereft

Of all your sensual worship. But he died.  
Ye did incite the fickle crowd, men lied,  
Swore falsely, call'd him "traitor," "devil-sold;"  
Perjured and base men hired themselves for gold  
To swear it; so they bound him to the pile,  
Tore us asunder, chain'd me near the while,  
To witness his great agony. Fools! mad!  
Not to know how my heart was beating glad  
To be thus near him. Fools! to think that I,  
Since he had rush'd *up* to his God on high,  
Would go *down* to my gods again. Ah, no;  
Since, cruel gods, ye've struck so fell a blow,  
I will no more of ye! I rave! I rave!—  
I hear my sainted loved one, from his grave—  
"There is no God save One," once yet again  
He speaks as in times past. In vain! in vain!  
All the world thunders. I will dare it—I—  
If it must be—will follow him on high,  
Through flames or blood. Behold, ye heathens!

see

How I revile your gods. Beneath this tree  
Is great Pan's altar; lo, I heave, and hew  
The graven stones. See how he's breaking, too,  
The hideous head wide sever'd. This a god,

To grovel here, at woman's will, on sod  
Wet with rich offerings? I'll cry aloud  
In market-place, in temples, in the crowd;  
I will proclaim it on the housetop high—  
“I am a Christian; he you doom'd to die  
Baptised me secretly; but now, I burn  
A crown of martyrdom like his to earn.”  
Oh! what is this, my love?  
Why art thou stooping o'er me from above?  
What is this throbbing tide in heart and brain?  
What is this rending of my soul with pain?  
Why are there near  
Angels and spirits murmuring?—whole bands—  
With waving palms, and smiles, and beckoning  
hands!  
I do not fear!  
Yet stoop still closer, loved one! murmur low  
Those glorious words that ever used to flow  
As from your soul, God-taught. Ah! now I know  
By this fast-ebbing breath  
This is—this must be—death.  
Teacher! friend! lover! by the way thou'st trod  
I've follow'd thus far—take me to thy God!  
I fear no more! Day dawns upon my night.

What?—Yes! “He’ll judge according to thy light.”  
 Yes, yes, I know! Now bear me on Thy breast!  
 Up, through the cloud-lands, “where the weary  
 rest.”

Ah! now earth’s trammels from my spirit fall!  
 Gods! ye are naught! The Christ is all in all!

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## THE PAST.

Oh! beautiful, lost Past!  
 With warm, rich promises so thickly spread,  
 Like flowers within the shroud-folds of the dead,  
 Nipp’d by the grave’s chill blast.

Oh! passionless and cold!  
 Thy clammy palms are slowly freezing o’er  
 The mad heart-leaps, that can return no more,  
 Hush’d ’neath thy death-robe’s fold.

We cannot loosen now,  
 From thy fix’d clasp, the wreaths thy cruel hands  
 Shred from our joy-tide, leaving thorny bands  
 To tighten round the brow.

We cannot win them back—  
The wingèd hopes, that flutter'd after thee ;  
We never shall in all the great To Be,  
They're lost upon thy track.

And, seeing all go by,  
The heart doth mourn, and beat her restless wing  
Against her prison bars, like bird whom spring  
Calls vainly on to fly.

In vain ! in vain ! poor heart !  
The ocean's tide and thine may ebb and flow,  
But time's swift tide comes once, and then must go  
Whence none again depart—

Into the shadowy land  
Behind us cast, where rich with fruited years,  
All ages, wreathed with deeds and gemm'd with  
tears,  
Elude our beckoning hand.

And from our soul-wrung cry,  
And out-toss'd arms, and eager prayers, hold tight  
Our garner'd treasures from our aching sight,  
Till time itself shall die.

## EVENING.

EVE, from the circling arms  
Of day steals stealthily, soft robed in light,  
Gliding with silent steps, to welcome night,  
Love heightening her charms.

Soft grows the valley's green,  
And flowers and herbs, from out the bending grass,  
Rise up to kiss her footprints. As they pass,  
Dewdrops show where they've been.

Gently the south wind sighs,  
And from the budding trees the gush of song  
From bright birds cheers her, as she floats along,  
Where dark the forest lies.

Hush'd is the wooded dell,  
Where violets hide, and primrose blossoms pale  
Throw their faint perfume o'er the scented gale,  
Hush'd as by potent spell.

The stream, with tone suppress'd,  
Hangs its white foam-wreaths on the blackthorn's  
spray,  
And to the lily sings a soften'd lay,  
Lulling it on its breast.

The fern-leaves bending low,  
Lay their green fringes on the dark pool's breast,  
Where, idly floating in a half unrest,  
Green grasses stream below.

Sweetly the silver chime  
Of the blue hyacinth's unnumber'd bells  
Is ringing out from all the shady dells  
The fair flowers' curfew-time.

And lo ! they bow their heads,  
And to the passing sunbeams sigh " Good-night !"  
As with a hasty kiss they take their flight,  
Ere darkness round them spreads.

Nearer, comes gentle Eve,  
Hush'd in the glow of passion's deepest calm ;  
Eyes drooping low with love ; lips breathing balm,  
Such as spring violets leave.

Swiftly, though half afraid,  
She hurries onward, down the last hill-side,  
Where Night stands silent, waiting her, his bride,  
Beneath, in the dim glade.

They meet—her upturn'd face  
Has, in the shadow of his plumes, grown dim ;  
Yet paling, fainting, still she hastes to him,  
And springs to his embrace.

Thou canst not keep her, Night ;  
As from the mountain side the snow-wreaths fade,  
Or fairy circles from the moonlit glade,  
So fades she in thy sight.

He soothes her wild alarms,  
Though dim and filmy wanes her glorious eye ;  
And, with one burning kiss, one shudd'ring sigh,  
She dies within his arms.

## WAIT !

Oh ! sere and wither'd flow'r,  
Droop not your head to die ;  
Delicious dews will fall  
From evening's tender eye—  
Wait ! oh wait !

Blacken'd and thirsty earth,  
Rend not your scorching breast ;  
Light clouds thou canst not see  
Are gathering in the west—  
Wait ! oh wait !

Wanderer, faint and worn,  
Foot-sore and travel-stain'd !  
There is prepared for thee  
A home as yet ungain'd—  
Wait ! oh wait !

Dear sufferer, rack'd with pain,  
Thy bitter wail for rest

Shall soon be hush'd for aye  
Upon a loving breast—  
Wait ! oh wait !

Heart, quivering 'neath the pangs  
That drain life dry,  
Endure a little more,  
Then live beyond the sky—  
Wait ! oh wait !

---

## DROUGHT.

FIERCELY the noon-day sun smote down  
On the shrinking earth's broad breast,  
Parch'd, and crack'd into gaping wounds ;  
And a spell that brought no rest  
Bound fainting nature in fiery bonds,  
To wait the eve's behest.

Unfleck'd by clouds, the sky did seem  
A sea of molten gold ;  
And nearer and nearer it circled the earth,

Like a lover over bold ;  
And oh ! for a cloud of the blackest dye,  
To wrap the earth in its fold.

Black and parch'd was the grass at our feet ;  
Black and wither'd the flowers ;  
The bird dropp'd down with dust-clogg'd wing,  
And under the castle tow'rs  
The lizard slept on a burning slab,  
Or swoon'd, through the weary hours.

The rocky bed of a dried-up stream  
Yawn'd idly far beneath,  
Where shrivell'd mosses, and grasses, and ferns,  
Hung in many a skeleton wreath ;  
Once, beneath them the bright stream shot,  
Like a scimitar from its sheath.

Even the sunflower sick'ning turn'd  
From its god all wearied away ;  
And the golden lily forgot to shine,  
And the fountain forgot to play ;  
But upon its dry and shrunken bed  
The dying fishes lay.

Beneath a lightning-blasted thorn  
The panting sheep sought shade ;  
And, where had been a copious pool,  
The choking cattle stray'd ;  
While all about their reeking sides  
The goading gnat-fly play'd.

The only living things were these  
That moved through the burning glow :  
The snake lay dissolving in slime away  
On the scorching rock below ;  
And the dragon-fly, with its lace-like wings,  
Clung faint to the sedges low.

Dizzier, giddier grew the hours ;  
The sky, like a hoop of fire,  
Narrow'd, and narrow'd, o'er vale and mead ;  
And the sun, in his mad desire,  
Turn'd the quivering air with amorous sigh  
To a tremulous, golden lyre.

Onward we went with flaming eyes,  
And a horrid madd'ning pain,  
That fired my blood, and sapp'd my life,

And scorch'd my reeling brain ;  
Onward, and ever within my ears  
Was the sound of rushing rain.

I held her burning hand in mine,  
And wildly dragg'd her on ;  
I strove to whisper words of hope,  
But the power to speak was gone ;  
My tongue was swell'n and black, and hung  
My stiffen'd lips upon.

Suddenly, from her quivering mouth  
Broke cries of mad delight,  
As from the hill the plain below  
First met our dazzled sight.  
Oh, joy ! oh, life ! a crystal lake  
Slept sparkling in heaven's light.

On ! on again ! my strength'ning arm  
I wound around her waist,  
For love, and hope, and promised life  
My weary sinews braced :  
Thus onward o'er the plain we sped  
In wild and stagg'ring haste.

That plain stretch'd far behind us now,  
    Yet, on before us gleam'd  
The waters of that crystal lake—  
    With lightning force there stream'd  
The hideous truth upon us then—  
    'Twas but the mirage beam'd !

She toss'd her pale arms to the skies,  
    And tore her golden hair,  
And with the white foam on her lip  
    She roll'd in anguish there :  
And then at last death closed her eyes  
    To all her fierce despair.

Yet brightly still the mirage gleam'd,  
    As though a friendly boon ;  
And fiercely still the sun smote down  
    Throughout that fiery noon ;  
And then to me a blessing came—  
    A long, a deadly swoon.

It pass'd, I woke ; the night hung low  
    A curtain o'er my head,  
And on my cool and moisten'd brow

Delicious dews were spread.  
*I* rose to life 'mid blackest night ;  
*She* 'neath the noon fell dead.

---

## SONG.

DIE out from the west, oh, golden sun !  
 The last bright shaft from thy quiver is flung ;  
 And the grey fog curls from the lowlands up ;  
 And flow'ret and blossom fold sheath and cup ;  
 While solemn and slow, o'er the silent air,  
 The lily-bells swing out thy requiem fair.

Die out from my heart, oh, golden love !  
 Thy last bright ray has shot back above ;  
 And tear-drop, and doubt-mist, and many a sigh,  
 Shroud faith and hope as they fainting lie,  
 And wilder, and sadder, with ebb and swell,  
 Grief rings from my spirit thy passing-bell.

## THE ISLE OF BLISS.

UNTO the Isle of Bliss,  
 Whither my bark I'm steering,  
 My soul through gloom and mist  
 Stands, outward peering ;  
 Waiting the fresh'ning breeze  
 Which thitherward is veering.

Crimson and gold, and blue,  
 All to one glory tending,  
 Hang on the outstretch'd view,  
 Its sights defending.  
 On my swift sail to thee,  
 Oh, Isle ! thy life is pending.

Oh, Isle ! like some bright star,  
 Your golden light is laving  
 The ocean from afar,  
 My path with glory paving.  
 Sail on ! sail on ! my bark,  
 Nor fear the billows' raving.

Sail on ! sail on ! I feel  
The low and witching measure  
Into my heart's core steal :  
Sail on ! I near my treasure—  
Now floating in to shore,  
I faint, I die with pleasure.

---

“FORGIVE ! FORGET !”

FORGIVE ! forget ! the cruel words  
Were but in idle jesting spoke ;  
Repented of before the sound  
Upon the startled silence broke.

Forgive ! forget ! I saw the frown  
Upon thy brow in shadow fall,  
And vainly sigh'd ; for who, alas !  
Can words once utter'd back recall ?

Forgive ! forget ! I ask in fear,  
For thou wilt say “ 'twas wanton sin ; ”  
Yet, oh ! I sue for pardon, ere  
Love parts, and anger's tide flows in.

“WEARY OF LIFE !”

WEARY of life ! Oh ! would that I might pass  
 Gently away, as fades the far-spread view  
 In distance dim from the material gaze ;  
 Not lost, but mingling with th' ethereal blue ;  
 To faith's bright eye alone yet clearly seen,  
 Where earth-mists part, and light pours down be-  
 tween.

Weary of life ! .Oh ! would that I might pass !  
 Just as the purple mist that gently glides  
 When the sun sets, all soft, and silently,  
 Adown the rugged mountain's heath-clad sides ;  
 Oh ! I would go, just as that melts away  
 On the horizon dim, where night meets day.

Weary of life ! and heart-sore ; would that I  
 Might give ~~my~~ spirit gently unto death !  
 As to the shadowy night the drooping flowers,  
 Uncheck'd, unhidden, yield their perfumed breath  
 In incense-wreaths, that, mounting to the skies,  
 Melt into purer forms, to gladden angels' eyes.

## WAITING FOR THE DAWN.

COLD is the night, and still :  
 Darkness doth close me in on ev'ry side,  
 And nearer, nearer, giant shadows glide ;  
 And from the stagnant rill  
 Pale spectral figures rise,  
 That to the skies  
 Mount upward, as to ghostly melodies :  
 Then from the heavy air,  
 They shake their clammy dews upon my head,  
 And hovering around with silent tread,  
 They backward crowd :  
 And now, the gray mist weaves for them a shroud ;  
 And gloom doth, like some evil-hearted thing,  
 Brood over earth, upon its ebon wing.

How drear it is, and lone !  
 Here on this silent plain,  
 Where to the night-wind's dying groan  
 The stunted thorn doth shudd'ring moan ;  
 And bitterly complain,

Among the sedges, brown and sere,  
The waters of yon sullen mere,  
As though they strove, in pain and fear,  
    To render up the slain ;  
For once, those flag-leaves, long and low,  
Were drabbled with a ruddy glow,  
    That rich and warm did fall ;  
And on those mossy stones that lie  
Beneath the waves so silently,  
Fell red, red drops, which to the sky  
    Aloud for vengeance call.  
And deep beneath the waters dark and drear,  
Dank weeds have deck'd the dead man's pebbly bier.

There is no moon on high,  
    She sank down long ago ;  
But now and again, as the clouds flit by,  
Solemnly, sadly, out of the sky,  
    The stars look down below ;  
And then again o'er the silver rift  
The troubled clouds in masses drift,  
And below on the plain the shadows shift,  
    And into my heart comes woe.  
And I gaze afar, thro' the cold, dark night,

Through the mist and gloom, for a beacon-light  
That shall guide me home.

But away, o'er stagnant marshes and bogs,  
Through reeking vapours and choking fogs,  
Fluttering over the slimy sods,

I can see alone  
The goblin ray, that with its flame so bright,  
Doth lead the weak astray by mimicking heaven's  
light.

But hark ! afar I hear  
A sound that telleth me midnight has fled :  
A cry from the living floats over the dead,  
Calming my fear ;  
And I stand with hope, upon horror's tomb,  
While a herald proclaimeth, "Room ! make room !  
For Dawn is drawing near."

And the fiery lights grow pale in yon town,  
And the lamp of the fens is sinking down ;  
And I wait, I wait.

I, and the dead man down in the mere,  
We wait with the watchman, priest, and seer,  
For the opening dawn of that golden year ;  
And 'tis late ! 'tis late !

Late in the night, and nearer the day,  
And the mists are lifting, cold and grey,  
And flutt'ring by mountain gorges away.

    And the owl and the bat  
Are whirling by upon leaden wings ;  
    And the earth is astir with evil things ;  
    The toad, and the rat,  
And each creature that loveth the darkness well,  
In the caves of earth, in hollow, and fell,  
    Must hide them fast :  
For louder, and louder, as speed the hours,  
The watchers afar, that look out from the tow'rs,  
    Blow high the blast ;  
And shrilly the heavens give back the tone.  
    And we, who are wearily waiting alone,  
    Rejoice and say—  
“ Patience ! the east with the dawn is red,  
And a cry from the living floats over the dead,  
    And 'tis well-nigh Day.”

## SHADOWS.

SHADOWS are deep'ning fast  
 Over the restless, never-silent sea ;  
 Shudd'rинг, and all aghast,  
 From their cold clasp it struggles to be free.

Shadows are stealing slow  
 Over the upturn'd face of dying day,  
 Where the red fever-glow  
 Is burning fiercely down to ashen grey.

Shadows ! ah, how they crowd  
 To cloud the love-light out of life's brief day !  
 And all in sable, shroud  
 The sunny joys we thought would ever stay.

Shadows ! ah ! how they spread  
 'Twixt heart and heart their ever-thick'ning  
 fold ;  
 Till love and trust both fled,  
 We long for gentle death to kiss us cold.

## TO ANGELINE.

DROOP eyelids ! like the sea-gull's snowy wings  
 Flutt'ring above blue waters. Dimple ! cheek,  
 Where all unchid my lips have fondly press'd,  
 And rosebuds given to life. Arch ! pencill'd brows,  
 Twin Cupid bows, whence arrows glance sure-tipp'd  
 With love's sweet poison. Blossom, rosy mouth,  
 Out into full-blown beauty. Riper ! lips,  
 Into rich lusciousness, like riven red  
 Of burst pomegranate blossom. Flash ! deep eyes,  
 Under the lengthen'd lash, like mountain tarn  
 Sunlit 'twixt fringing sedges. Smile on me !  
 Ope thy white arms and clasp me to thy heart,  
 And then—let come what will.

---

## REMEMBER ! OR, FORGET !

Go ! when the sunset golden  
 Floods meadow green and dell,  
 Where, in the days now olden,  
 Fondly thy love-plaint fell :

Gaze on the heavens so tender,  
Flowers with bright dewdrops wet,  
And if thou *wilt*, remember !  
Or, if thou *canst*, forget !

Rest 'neath the boughs o'er-bending,  
List to the wood-birds' song ;  
Whose footsteps once came wending  
There, through the grasses long ?  
Who was it vow'd to defend her ?  
Who holds that love-lay yet ?  
Ah ! if thou *wilt*, remember !  
Or, if thou *canst*, forget !

Gaze at the craved-for token—  
Treasured so then with care ;  
Think of the vows o'er it spoken—  
Lock of bright golden hair !  
Ruddy and warm was September  
When that last eve they met.  
Ah ! if thou *wilt*, remember !  
Or, if thou *canst*, forget !

## THE SWORD AND ITS SCABBARD.

It hung aloft in the broken arch  
 Of a ruin'd aisle of time,  
 And the crumbling stones and gaping rents  
 Were wet with ages' rime.

'Twas a slender sword, a biting blade,  
 With a ring of the metal true ;  
 And a backward spring from the bending thrall  
 That a baser blade might rue.

'Twas firmly set in its sparkling haft,  
 Which a jewell'd rainbow bound ;  
 And a mystic sign from the Maker's Hand  
 Amidst its gems was found.

'Twas closely sheath'd ; nor rust, nor speck,  
 Had dull'd its lustre bright ;  
 'Twas a maiden sword ; no sullyng drops  
 Had clouded out its light.

It was fairly dight—that shelt'ring sheath—  
‘Twas a goodly sight to see  
The red, red gold, and the crusting gems,  
And the symbol tracery.

It was fairly dight, but many a dint,  
And many a bruise was there ;  
And many a rusting stain, and dust,  
It had kept from the sword with care.

So it hung aloft, did the keen-edged sword,  
For many a weary day,  
It swung in the blast, as it hurried past,  
Or flash'd in the sickly ray.

It rustled, and thrill'd, in its prison-sheath ;  
It chafed at the galling band :  
It long'd for the clash, and the clang of strife,  
And the struggle, hand to hand.

It swung, and sway'd, in the moaning wind,  
For many a weary day,  
Till there dawn'd a morn when its wearing blade  
Had fretted the scabbard away.

It was free at last ! thro' the murky air  
    It flash'd a blaze around ;  
And the shatter'd sheath sunk down beneath,  
    To hide it in the ground.

It was free at last ! it had cut its way  
    Through every hind'ring band,  
And it sprang with its mystic sign undimm'd  
    Far back to the Maker's Hand.

---

## LOVED AND LOST.

COME not with phrases calm,  
And words' well measured, in an hour like this,  
Now when the shatter'd fragments of my bliss  
    Are smitten from my palm.

Leave me to make my moan ;  
Philosophy's cold teaching is in vain,  
Numb'd out of feeling ; blind in soul with pain ;  
    Let me writhe here alone.

The maim'd bird creeps away  
E'en from its mate, in gloom alone to die,  
And I, but madden'd by all sympathy,  
'Mid solitude would stay.

Leave me ! thus tempest-toss'd  
I loathe all counsel ; words but anger me.  
Herein is all my hopeless agony—  
I've loved !—and lost !

---

## LIFE.

Oh life ! with thy ebb and flow !  
Thy rush, and turmoil, and madness ;  
With thy mirth akin to woe,  
And thy woe akin to gladness.

With thy yielding, and rebound,  
When the grief-storm o'er thee passes ;  
Leaving shade, nor wake, nor sound,  
More than wind-wave o'er long grasses.

With thy throb, and heat, and glow ;  
That hint of life eternal :  
As the fire-sparks here below  
Tell of their birth supernal.

With thy soft restoring kiss  
To the cheek that death was paling :  
And thy streams of warming bliss  
To the fountain that was failing :

And thy rapt'rous bursts of joy  
To very pain-chords ringing ;  
And thy passion-sweets, that cloy  
The lips to which they're clinging.

With thy heaving, ne'er suppress'd ;  
And thy depths of lore unspoken :  
Thy myst'ries half confess'd  
As thy goblet's drain'd and broken.

Oh life ! we take thee up  
As a bright and glitt'ring treasure,  
And quaff thy brimming cup,  
And dance thy giddy measure :

And like the birds, and flowers,  
And scents, the wind's wing lifteth,  
We leave our waking powers  
Where fickle fancy drifteth;

And dream, or work, or play,  
As the mood or need be greatest,  
Thro' night, and noon, and day,  
From the earliest to the latest.

We have quaff'd thee, slaked our thirst,  
Ere noon is o'er us burning,  
And thy boon is bless'd or curst  
Ere our evening tide is turning :

Craved wildly by the glad  
When their revel rings the loudest ;  
Cursed deeply by the sad  
When their agony is proudest.

Oh life ! so haunted here  
With the shades of things undying ;  
And the rush of wings so near  
That tempt our souls to flying.

The fountain is above  
Whence thy tiny stream is gushing :  
The source—the light of love  
Whence thy earth-sent ray is rushing.

The river runs not back  
To the fount whence 'twas up-broken ;  
But, oh life ! thy backward track  
Is thy birthright's sacred token.

There the visions shall be real,  
And the joys for ever vernal ;  
And thy yearn'd-for, bright ideal,  
Seen and known, as—life eternal.

---

## DRIFTING AWAY !

HELD in the crescent sweep of a silver bay,  
Lull'd by the tender chimes of the foam-bells' play,  
Fann'd by the wind, which croons soft lullabies,  
Rock'd by the swaying waves, a frail bark lies.

Gold o'er the prow, and deck, o'er the yards and mast;

Gold where the ribs and stays hold the fair form fast;

Gold o'er the helm which reins her dainty tread ;  
Gold all the sculptured grace of her figure-head.

Golden her figure-head, with jewels rare  
Binding the brow and throat, and the bosom fair,  
Burning out of the depths of the eyes, that shine  
Into the mists, and foam, and the blinding brine.

Golden the anchor thrown 'mid the sands below ;  
Golden the fragile cord that moors her now ;  
Silken the many ropes in their threefold coil ;  
Silken, and wondrously frail for the strain, and toil.

Silken the snowy sail, with a rainbow glow  
Woven in characters fair, for the workers below,  
Woven in weft, and woof, of the snowy sail ;  
Woven in symbol, and name, on the pennon pale.

Tenderly shaped and fair, but a fragile bark  
Into the mists afar to steer in the dark ;

Tenderly shaped and fair, how shall she tread  
When sea and sky, in one, meet overhead ?

Bark ! little bark ! why now dost thou flutter so ?  
What ! has the fresh'ning breeze bade thee go ?  
Hands, spirit hands unseen the anchor weigh,  
And the golden cord is snapp'd from its hold away.

Swift runs the stream and fast from the silver bay ;  
Out comes the tender bark with her streamer gay :  
Drifting ! drifting away ! down, down with the tide :  
Drifting ! drifting away ! and never a steersman to  
guide.

Cold blows the wind and chill thro' the eastern  
skies ;  
Swift to the western depths the tired day hies :  
Dull heavy clouds stretch forth o'er the heavens'  
bright blue :  
Up from the distant mere screams the wild curlew.

Drifting ! drifting away is the little boat,  
While o'er the sunny meads chimes of evening float ;

Down from the weed-rank banks purple blossoms  
nod ;  
Rustle the bulrush-spears, and the golden-rod.

Drifting ! drifting away ! and the narrow stream  
Swifter and broader ahead, and only a gleam  
From gold flow'r-stars 'mid the grass, and the  
flick'ring fire  
Where widow'd day sinks down on her love's death-  
pyre.

Drifting ! drifting away ! and oh ! ever behind  
Steadily, steadily, on comes the sweeping wind.  
Drifting, drifting away ! and the shoals ahead,  
And the sunken rocks, unlit by a beacon red.

Darker the gloomy sky ; but a crimson gleam,  
Over the low, dun clouds, like a fading dream.  
Ghostly, and shadowy, and still, glides the fated bark  
Into the mist, and gloom, and the unknown dark.

Into the mist, and gloom, and the surf-beat white ;  
Rushing from river to sea, from day into night ;

Plunging madly at last 'mid the wrack, and roar.  
God ! who can guide her but Thee such breakers  
o'er ?

Drifting ! drifting again ! now the struggle's past ;  
Sorrow, and weeping, and strife, are all over at last.  
Drifting ! drifting away ! on a tideless sea—  
Never a backward flow hath eternity.

---

## THE BITTEREST PAIN.

THERE is a pain, of every pain the worst  
    Of all that furrow deep the soul of man ;  
This casts it down into the depths accurst,  
    Across whose gloom no rainbow arch can span.

'Tis sad to hear the earth thud dull, and cold,  
    Down on our dead, lost to our longing sight.  
'Tis sad to miss the pet lamb of the fold,  
    And trace its wand'rings to o'erwhelming night.

'Tis sad to part 'mid misery and fears  
From loved and loving ones. To wander lone,  
Away from home and country ; pains and tears  
Unsoothed, unwiped ; unhusht the anguish-moan.

'Tis sad to feel the heart grow grey, and old,  
And bow'd, and sorrowful before its time.  
'Tis sad to see the looks of love grow cold ;  
And youth's bright locks grief-blanch'd in age's  
rime.

Ay ! sad ! all sad ! oh, mournful ones ! but worst  
The bitter pain, that bears no outward token  
Given, when wrong'd hope out of the torn heart  
burst,  
Cursing it with the doom to—live on, broken.

---

### MUSIC.

OH ! give me music ! for my soul is sick,  
Sick with a nameless longing unto death ;  
Fill, melody, the aching void ; or quick !  
Bear me above this anguish, on thy breath.

So, raise the strain ! high onward let it gush,  
Rippling, and murmuring like a streamlet gay :  
Swell up the chords to agony's wild rush,  
Then let it break, and die in sobs away.

Waving, and swerving, like a wind-bent flame,  
Hark ! how the measured melody aspires.  
Broken, and trembling, now it comes again,  
Smothering in tenderness its shatter'd fires.

Ah ! droop not languidly to earth, but soar  
Up on some incense-cloud if thou must rest ;  
Beat with light wing 'gainst heaven's scarce-closèd  
door ;  
Drink at that fountain to renew thy zest.

Tenderly ! tenderly ! wake it back to life ;  
Softly and light, as 'twere a slumb'ring child ;  
Lest tumult, anger, bitterness, and strife,  
Clash out the melody in discord wild.

Soothingly, soothingly, like liquid plash  
Of measured wave-beat on a flow'r-wreath'd  
shore ;

Merrily, merrily, like the rapid dash  
Of April raindrops, now it comes once more.

Headlong, tumultuous, bearing all along  
In the swift current of its mighty power :  
There it doth rush above each barrier strong,  
And here, as 'twere, sigh round the lily-flower.

Now unto throbs of agony it thrills,  
And drowns the senses ; in a wild delight  
Upleaps my soul to dare whate'er she wills,  
Soaring to bathe her wings in founts of light.

Flood me with melody ! for I would float  
Out on its silver tide from pain-rack'd earth,  
Back to the land whence flow'd the first wave-note ;  
Back where the soul, and music, both had birth.

Music, thy power hath won ! my heart-chords throb  
And rise and fall to thine, in echo true ;  
My woe dies out on thy last quiv'ring sob,  
And grief-mists part, to let heaven's smile pass  
through.



## GONE !

Gone !

Out of the heaven its blue ;  
 Out of the earth its brightness ;  
 Out of eve's fount the dew ;  
 Out of the air its lightness.

Gone !

Out of the sea its chime ;  
 Out of the dance its measure ;  
 Out of the stream its rhyme ;  
 Out of the casket its treasure.

Gone !

Out of the lyre its power ;  
 Out of the voice its sweetness ;  
 Out of all song the dower ;  
 Out of all time the fleetness.

Gone !

Out of the rose-wreath its bloom ;  
 Out of the festal its brightness ;

Out of the incense perfume ;  
Out of the lily its whiteness.

Gone :

Out of a life its glad youth,  
All that had promised a morrow ;  
Love, joy, hope, happiness, truth,  
Leaving a present of sorrow,  
Ever to tint, as the sky does the sea,  
All that the future keeps treasured, *to be.*

---

### REST.

REST thee ! oh rest thee ! day has been long,  
Weary the journey struggling on ;  
Fierce the hot sunshine, and rugged the road,  
Feeble the footstep and heavy the load.

Rest thee ! oh rest thee ! hard was the toil ;  
Weed-rank the garden, heavy the soil ;  
Lavish the sowing, and costly the grain ;  
Scanty the harvest, and little the gain.

Put down the mattock, put down the hoe ;  
Loosen the tether, unstring the bow ;  
Cease the rush onward, and slacken the strain ;  
Droop weary fingers, and rest weary brain.

Rest thee ! oh, rest thee ! rise from thy toil ;  
Put down the distaff, let go the coil ;  
Tangled, and knotted, cut off the thread ;  
Stay the deft handling, stay the swift tread.

Fold up the banner, shake out the dust ;  
Helmet and hauberk leave to the rust ;  
Into the scabbard ! in, with the blade ;  
Stay the mad havock of slaughter and raid.

Rest thee ! oh rest thee ! sundown is past ;  
Bourn for the pilgrim opens at last ;  
Loosen the girdle, put the staff by ;  
Time of refreshment and slumber is nigh.

Eaglet to ærie, bird to its nest ;  
Bark to the haven, babe to the breast ;  
Close heavy eyelids never to part,  
Slumber and death lull the heaviest heart.

### THE GENTLE LADY.

NONE knew her country, kindred, name ;  
 'Twas said she was of noble race,  
 But that her soul had noble fame  
 Was written on her face.

Calm brow, and eyes like stars that glow  
 Reflected in a mountain lake ;  
 And voice whose truthful tones and low  
 All tender echoes wake.

A subtle charm in face and mien  
 Held heart and eye as by a spell—  
 The nameless charm won but, I ween,  
 From suff'ring long, and well.

She came when deadly sickness stalk'd  
 In death and darkness thro' the land ;  
 Close on its blacken'd trail she walk'd,  
 With healing heart and hand.

Her glist'ning garments won no taint ;  
    Her purity no leprous spot ;  
Though with the meekness of a saint  
    She shared the common lot.

Bound to no order, class, or vow,  
    But by the love which conquereth all,  
Winning the dullest hearts to bow  
    Gladly to its sweet thrall.

Faint with such labour, and yet strong,  
    Strong in the strength, and pow'r, of right,  
She wrestled bravely with the wrong,  
    On, upward to the light.

Unwearied battling on with sin ;  
    Unflinching 'mid the scenes of death ;  
Unceasing in her trials to win  
    Souls from pollution's breath.

To her white robe the sinful clung,  
    Thus hoping heaven's straight gate to clear :  
The guiltiest heart with anguish wrung  
    In love forgot its fear.

She, with the mourner watch'd and wept ;  
Loosed many a sinner from his snare.  
The foundling to her bosom crept,  
And slumber'd sweetly there.

She laid her down at last to rest,  
When night had well-nigh pass'd away ;  
And pillow'd on an angel's breast,  
She woke to endless day :

And passing, left a fadeless palm  
Wreath'd green, above her unknown name.  
Her life had been a funeral psalm,  
Death was its glad refrain.

---

## IN THE TWILIGHT.

BACK from the grassy meadows,  
Up o'er the tall elm trees ;  
Over the hills where the gushing rills  
Are toss'd by the joyous breeze—  
The sun and the sunbeams have hasten'd  
On, to their couch in the seas.

Gone ! like another Elijah,  
In a chariot of fire to the skies,  
Is the glorified day ; where it passes away  
Its wonderful mantle lies—  
Golden, and crimson, to-morrow  
Will don, with the glad sunrise.

Silently, solemnly, rolling  
Down from the hill to the dale,  
On comes the purple mist-wreath  
Drawing its softening veil  
Over the hard, and the rough-hewn,  
Over the worn, and the pale.

Tenderly ! ah how tenderly !  
Beckoning shadows steal ;  
Shadows that mock us with smile, and mien,  
And gesture, and look, of the real.  
All come trooping together,  
The loved, the lost, the leal.

All come trooping together,  
Wept for and pray'd for alway ;  
But ere they are clasp'd to the yearning heart

Melting and gliding away.  
We may seek them *here* in the twilight ;  
We shall find them *there* in full day.

---

## GENIUS.

“WHAT of that spirit whose breath gives life  
To the visions of high desire ?  
Whose smile for men  
Weaves a diadem,  
And who speaks with tongues of fire ?”

Over the deserts of ages past  
He hath hurried with burning feet,  
And the far white track  
Still reflecteth back  
Where a god with men did meet.

Down in rich cities they built to him  
Full many a goodly fane ;  
And vot'ries bring  
Their offering  
For weal, or for deadly bane.

They worship him low, they laud him high,  
To win him e'en aspire  
Throughout long years  
Of anguish-fears  
To be baptized with fire.

And who doth follow, and who doth win,  
And use the best, his grace,  
At set of sun  
When work is done,  
Hath run a goodly race.

But who doth grovel content at his feet,  
And gather from the mire  
Dark evil things  
With venom-stings,  
His doom is sure, and dire.

And he who hath dwelt with him face to face  
In the pure white light on high,  
And for mankind  
All rays combined  
And arch'd them through their sky—

Or hath patiently delved in wisdom's mines,  
Where precious treasures lie,  
And jewels found,  
And deftly bound  
To crown posterity—

Or, hath toil'd to the living waters up,  
Pour'd from beyond the sky,  
And a streamlet led  
From that fountain-head  
To depths where parch'd souls die—

Such, only such, amid whirl, and rush,  
Of things of sound and name,  
Shall genius place  
E'en here, in face  
Of an undying fame.

---

## SONG.

THE dewdrop dash'd from leaf to leaf, now sleepeth  
Calm, on the rose's breast;

And love awearied, hastes to love, and weepeth  
 All its sweet pains to rest.

The sun consumed with longing plunges madly  
 To die 'mid ocean's brine ;  
 And I, oh love ! would lose myself how gladly,  
 Whelming my soul in thine.

---

## LOVE AND HATE.

Who says that true love dies  
 When left deceived or slighted ?  
 Who says its beauty flies  
 When its god is struck and blighted ?

The love that was, still is,  
 Whate'er the bare form crashes ;  
 As the spirit lives and is  
 When the body wastes to ashes.

Who says love turns to hate ?  
 The true love, and the golden.  
 Was the adder and its mate  
 In the tender dove-eggs holden ?

Love once, is love for aye :  
And hate, is hate for ever ;  
Far as heaven and hell away  
The two, link'd howsoever.

Linked ? Ay, as heaven and hell  
By the earth that lies betwixt them ;  
But apart—Though angels fell  
It ne'er confused nor mixt them.

No ! love and hate are two ;  
Held as night and day are holden.  
Hate to hate will still be true ;  
Love to love, as gold to golden.

The tree is still a tree  
Though winter o'er it passes :  
The lake a lake must be  
Though frost its water glasses.

And love is love alway,  
Or in dark, or sunny weather ;  
And its reign is one for aye,  
For it *was*, and *is*, for *ever*.

**SONG OF THE SLAVE AT LABOUR'S  
WEARY MILL.**

OH ! weary life I needs must bear !  
Oh ! crushing weight of growing care !  
Oh ! whelming depths of blank despair !

Quick hands, quick brain, strong, restless will,  
In bondage to the sluggish mill  
That grinds the husks of sameness still.

O'er stagnant flood sick fancy springs  
To utmost bound of tether'd wings,  
To brood above o'er vanish'd things.

Oh ! weary is the mill to turn !  
While fiery noon doth downward burn  
To brink of evening's dewy urn.

But mire, and slime, to churn and beat ;  
But tangled weeds to grind and meet ;  
But choking damps, and reeking heat.

But loathsome reptiles twist and coil ;  
But blind-worms groping 'mid the soil ;  
These, sole companions of my toil.

Oh ! for the turmoil and the strife,  
With which the rushing world is rife !  
I wither in this shade of life.

Oh to be free ! to come, and go,  
To live—ah ! e'en the bitterest throe  
Of life full-throbb'd, 'twere bliss to know.

Free from this dull and senseless round  
Of sodden being, I would bound  
Up 'mid the blue, where light is found.

Up 'mid the blue, 'mid rush of wings ;  
'Mid whirl of heaven's mysterious things ;  
'Mid melody's encircling rings.

'Mid braided lights of every hue ;  
'Mid founts of ether, seas of blue ;  
'Mid glad, free life, for ever new.

Up where the depths of ceaseless mirth  
Pour evermore upon the earth  
Glad streams, to fertilize our dearth.

Ah me ! 'tis vain ! for slav'ry's nod  
Doth hold me still to toil and plod ;  
Doth urge me with an iron rod.

And youth, and love, with eager feet,  
Whence failing echoes feebly beat,  
Are speeding far their swift retreat.

The cold wind brings the distant roar  
Of that far world, upon whose shore  
The human tide breaks evermore.

Oh ! but to plunge amid that tide !  
Triumphant o'er its waves to ride,  
And gain the port on yonder side !

That rush and whirl ; that restless flow ;  
That tramp, that beat, that come, that go,  
Is life, earth's life, and good to know.

'Twas will'd in heaven ere earth began,  
Ere time was meted to a span,  
Ere dust was quicken'd into man—

'Twas will'd that life should throb and beat ;  
Should pulse and fret ; should thrill and heat ;  
Should be but by its progress meet.

"On !" was the word ; no stop, no rest ;  
"On !" swift or slow, 'tis life's behest ;  
On ! marks the life within man's breast.

On ! to the strife, on ! to the fight !  
On ! to the battle waged by right  
Against the crushing arm of might.

On ! linger not ! to stay is death ;  
Stagnation is pollution's breath,  
"The day to work in," wisdom saith.

Rust eats the steel, unused alway  
Frets mind, and matter, quick away ;  
And sloth is clogg'd with foul decay.

So ! dull mill grind this loathsome slime,  
Quick hands, quick brain, beat on in time  
Till youth be froth'd in age's rime.

Who knows ? Perhaps the flood will clear,  
Till late in time the sluggish mere  
Shall like a crystal lake appear.

What matter ? Restless, struggling will,  
Do thou henceforth the Master's will :  
Grind on ! grind on ! the heavy mill.

Turn swift, turn sure, turn never slow,  
Onward, amid the weal and woe  
'Tis given thee here to feel and know.

Turn evermore, 'mid plash and foam ;  
Sigh not for rest ! sigh not to roam !  
Work well ! and wait thy welcome home.

"Twill come beyond the rainbow's rim ;  
"Twill shiver through the death-mists dim,  
That " Welcome home !" of angels' hymn.

"Twill rise and swell, and onward roll ;  
"Twill free thy spirit, wing thy soul,  
Till it doth rest in heaven—its goal.

---

## THE MESSENGER.

Go, crested wave ! sport here no more,  
But ripple back across the sea,  
And break upon that southern shore  
Where my beloved one waits for me.

Go ! murmur in her willing ear  
How loving, fond, and true am I ;  
Tell her I pine and languish here,  
Banish'd from her I can but die.

Bear her these falling tears, as meet  
To gleam as jewels on her hand ;  
Kiss, gently kiss her little feet,  
That nestle in the golden sand.

Show'r foam-flow'r's o'er her silken hair ;  
Work on her heart thy soothing spell ;  
Gem her pure brow with di'monds rare ;  
Then dying, moan my heart's farewell.

---

## A SPRING MEMORY.

Dost thou remember ? dost thou ?  
How we three stood,  
When the sweet spring came, in the glimmer and  
sheen,  
When pale, bright gold, and silver, and green,  
In that tangled, silent wood.  
Lent, except for the wind's soft sigh,  
Or the startled birds' upspringing cry,  
Or the chirp of their callow brood ;  
When dewdrops some fairy, unseen, shook down  
From the blossoms, in frolicsome mood.

Dost thou remember ? dost thou ?  
The wild briar trail'd around,  
And thickly the primrose blossoms pale

Look'd hopefully up, in that wooded dale,  
Like stars from the mossy ground;  
And the violet's eye of tenderest blue,  
From the trellis of leaves look'd merrily through  
That around her lattice bound.  
And the graceful fern-leaves and streaming grass  
Waved thickly o'er every mound.

Far on the dim horizon  
The sea lay cold and grey,  
For the sun had sought his western bow'rs,  
Yet we linger'd on gath'ring pale spring flow'rs,  
And many a budding spray.  
Now, on the chill ground the sere leaves lie,  
And the autumn wind goes moaning by,  
And the flowers have died away ;  
And we, who are travellers o'er life's broad waste,  
May wander apart alway.

The spring will come again  
When winter's days are o'er ;  
And the fair flowers wake to her warm caress,  
And the herbs yield balm that her soft feet press,  
And the birds sing as of yore ;

But we, who were blither than bird or flower,  
Plucking blossoms and leaves in that greenwood  
bower,  
Shall meet there nevermore.  
E'en as I write it the wind sighs by,  
And echoes, "Nevermore!"

---

## LOVE SLAIN.

THINE image, love, lies stiff'ning in my heart,  
As a cold corpse within a silent wood,  
Mocking with its mute eloquence the calm,  
Making more hideous still the deep, dark solitude.  
Where now it lies full many a bright flow'r grew,  
Kiss'd by the golden sun, fed by the morning dew.

It was not love I worshipp'd long ago,  
But a fair ideal of the teeming brain  
Madly adopted by my foolish heart,  
Within whose depths it now lies foully slain ;  
Thyself hath with the same too fatal blow  
Lain the real love, with the ideal, low.

Shall I then listless sit and idly pine  
Above the poor remains of what was fair ?  
Nay ! rather pity since my love is dead,  
Let us with haste the obsequies prepare.  
Dig deep the grave, and hollow out a bed ;  
Hide from the living : hide the ghastly dead !

---

## UNDER THE LIME TREES.

Oh, linden blossoms ! faint and sweet  
Your perfume lingers round the feet  
Of years, that to a merry chime  
Went dancing down the aisles of time ;  
But as I stand alone  
To-day beneath you, spirit-sore,  
The present and the glad before  
Are blended into one.

For still the whisper'd tale goes on  
The wingèd buds, and leaves among ;  
And still the leaflets speak in rhyme,  
And still the nodding boughs keep time ;

And in the mimic bow'rs,  
High up, the festal bees chant low  
Their full content, as in the glow  
Of those long-vanish'd hours.

Unchanged seems all ; an added grace  
If aught is changed pervades the place.  
The very sunset glow rests now  
Upon it, as once long ago,  
    In glad spring-tide of youth.  
But nevermore love's golden haze  
Will halo it, as in those days  
    Of faith, and hope, and truth.

Yet, linden blossoms ! faint and sweet,  
Lay still your perfume round the feet  
Of years, that to a sadder chime  
Go swiftly down the aisles of time ;  
    And when I cease to come,  
Whisper, and hymn to those I love,  
And point them to the heaven above,  
    Love's birthplace, and love's home.

## WITH NIGHT AND NATURE.

ONCE more delicious night ! For hours the cold  
Prosaic day hath kept o'er me its hold,  
With all its petty cares, and hollow joys,  
Its fret and miseries, its glare and noise.  
Now freed at last from labour's weary oar,  
Out to thy holy calm I rush once more.  
Oh beautiful ! my earliest love ! fair night !  
How thou dost flood my soul with soft delight !  
Tenderly, tenderly bend thou o'er me now,  
And press this fever-pain from my hot brow  
With thy cool palms ; and lay thy finger-tips,  
Dripping with dew, upon my parching lips ;  
Draw out with soft long kiss the venom darts  
That rankle soul-deep ; fan the fiery smarts  
Of injured pride ; and where scorn's arrows sped,  
Tears from thy tender eyes in pity shed.  
Lower, bend lower ! tender nurse and true !  
Down from the calm serene of heaven's own blue,  
Fold me all passion-husht to thy pure breast,  
There let me wearied lie in slumbrous rest.

Gaze deep upon me with thine eyes so bright,  
Till mine, world-dazed erewhile, at thine relight.  
Ah ! now for thought.—Oh, golden circling air !  
Keep'st thou the record of the thoughts that were  
Breath'd passion-hot on thee in times gone by ?  
That which was given thee once, say, can it die ?  
Are these, then, haunting échoes ? these that thrill  
And throb and pulse within thee, quiv'ring low,  
Setting the heart dream-laden all aglow ?  
Is that which lifts thy ad'rous wing to-night  
The unhusht sigh love pour'd from full delight  
In years now fled ? Hath it long flutter'd lone,  
Widow'd of music, but a voiceless moan,  
Shudd'ring within the silence, while the ear  
Ached for the wind-wave which might bring it near ?  
Vainly ! the very echoes it awoke  
Shatter'd long since in dying cadence broke ;  
Yet dying, died not utterly, but float  
'Mid air, as 'mid the sunbeam doth the mote ;  
But shudd'ring shades of what was once a thing,  
But aimless atoms rent from perfect ring.  
Were these cold dews that bead thy veil, oh night !  
Once love's warm tears kiss'd off from eyes of  
light ?

Hush thee, oh heart ! why dost thou question so ?  
What boots to thee the *was* of joy or woe ?  
Thy mighty *is*, embodied now thine own,  
Waits if thou wilt, to make all myst'ries known.  
To-morrow hideth yesterday, and fast  
Down time's grey aisles moans back the fleeting  
Past.

“Never again ! I faint ! I die ! farewell !  
Keep thou the shade ! I guard the substance well.”  
Enough ! so be it, Past ! flit fast and far,  
Down where yon tideless sea must quench thy star.  
Which is the substance ? which the shade ? and  
who

Holds both, or either ? Wisdom shall prove true  
In far eternity, when time shall be  
Whelmed in the depths of that vast emerald sea.—  
But there ! athwart the vale a braided beam  
Of tender light hath traced a road of sheen,  
Up from the earth, far to the heavens o'erhead ;  
What sighed the breeze ? “That way an angel  
fled.”

True ! he did gather ere 'twas lost in air  
The broken fragments of a fal'ring prayer :  
Not faultless all, not human cares above,

Yet—that 'twas love-born—wafted up to Love.  
I weary now of solitude ; this calm  
I yearn'd for so, as care's most healing balm,  
Appals me. I who rush'd from sunny bands  
Of company and mirth ; I stretch weak hands,  
Cold, trembling hands, out to the silent air,  
Groping for those that should have met mine there.  
They close on their own weakness ; tears arise,  
And none are by to wipe my blinded eyes ;  
I sigh ; no answering echo ; full at heart,  
Big sobs will rend the struggling lips apart.  
Still heedless night ! thou dost not quench one ray,  
Nor mourn, though here a life were wrench'd away.  
Come ! I will in ! strange ghosts are flocking round,  
Strange and fantastic shadows fleck the ground.  
Dim, fitful, tremulous, and mocking real,  
Of friend, and foe ; of false, of true, of leal.  
Ay ! I will in to slumber ; out ahead,  
Over yon low, long hill, a streak of red  
Flares in the sky—a banner dawn has thrown  
Out to the earth to claim it for her own.  
Light brightens surely there ; hail promise true !  
Writ in life's red on love's cerulean blue.  
Light, life, and love, are ever ; night, death, hate,

Their sin-cast shadows—left without the gate  
Of that bright sinless home. Turn eastward!  
watch ! pray ! wait !

---

## UP AND WORK !

CEASE ! oh feeble heart to sigh !  
Up, and work ! the time is fleeting;  
Life's broad flood bears all things nigh,  
Up ! and give them earnest greeting.

Love, and honour, wealth, and fame,  
May be thine by patient wooing ;  
Up ! and earn thyself a name ;  
Up ! this life is all for doing.

Hearts that sigh, and lagging feet,  
Feeble dreams, howe'er engaging,  
Cannot conquer, or compete  
In the battle round us raging.

Brace the sinews ! nerve the heart !  
Lift the hands ! so idly falling ;



Forward ! onward ! do thy part !

Duty, love, and life, are calling.

Wrestle ! struggle ! run ! endure !

Work in patience, doubting never :

Somehow, somewhere, triumph sure

Waits to crown the earnest ever.

Earn a something ; honour, fame,

Power and wealth with time must perish ;

Let them ! still, unto thy name

Add a something love may cherish.

Something, be it e'er so small,

Love shall keep with memory tender ;

Something, which the angels' call

Greeting thee, may sweeter render.

---

### THE WANDERING JEW.

ACCURST ! accurst ! the hand of God subduing

Upon my soul its fiery impress burns ;

His anger, like a flaming sword, pursuing,

From ev'ry shelt'ring bourn my spirit turns ;

My crime—whose awful blackness pales to white  
Cain's blood-stain'd brow—consumes me with its  
might.

Consumes, but never kills ; ah ! there's the anguish  
Beyond the power of mortal speech to tell ;  
Doom'd thus to see all nations die, and languish  
In vain, for that one end, to break this spell  
Which holds me scathless through all perils, rife  
With myriad deaths, and curses me with life.

Life ? no ! no ! no ! not life, for that means giving  
And taking all things beautiful, and good ;  
Enjoyment, happiness ; but this, is living  
As He did, hanging on the fatal rood ;  
Lord ! but awhile was glory veil'd from Thee,  
While God's eternal frown doth rest on me.

Mine was the work, mine were the blows that nail'd  
The Christ I knew not to the cursed tree ;  
Mine were the eager lips that fast assail'd  
His dying ears with horrid blasphemy.  
One moment then I turn'd, and met His gaze,  
And ev'ry feeling lost in wild amaze.

He is the Christ ! I saw, believed, and trembled,  
So do the devils in the depths of hell,  
But from such madd'ning passions then assembled  
Repentance could not work its holy spell :  
Horror, remorse, and fear, subdued my soul,  
And hold it still in all their dread control.

And whilst I cower'd, a tempest o'er me sweeping  
Whirl'd me afar ; swift lightnings darted round ;  
Cold fear through all my quivering flesh came  
creeping,  
As through the thunder rang a direful sound.  
Oh God ! Thy words still pierce me as a sword—  
“ On ! till I come, reviler of thy Lord ! ”

E'en so ! the whirlwind drives me on for ever  
Beyond all home, all kindred, all desire :  
All woe whelm'd deep in this, which still must sever  
My wither'd soul from all time sees expire ;  
All love, all hate, all cherish'd dreams gone by ;  
All joy, all fear, all hope, save one—to die.

Beyond all bound'ry lines, and halts, and stations ;  
Watching the peoples' hurried ebb and flow :

The rise, the struggle, fall, of mighty nations ;  
Worlds' dawning light ; and then their dying glow.  
Age after age dissolve in smoke, and roll  
From time away, as 'twere a shrivell'd scroll.

On ! ever on ! where desert sands are burning,  
Reeling beneath the sun's fierce scorching heat :  
On ! where the mountain-tops are coldly spurning  
The howling blasts, that madly round them beat.  
On ! where the rushing rivers proudly swell ;  
On ! where the lava-floods burst up from hell.

In vain for me the tender meads are smiling,  
In all their broider'd raiment fairly dight ;  
Vain ! all in vain ! the flow'ry meads beguiling  
The weary frame with visions of delight.  
E'en as I sink to rest the howling blast  
Whirls me again, as wither'd leaflet past.

Low hangs the luscious fruit ; my mouth is parching,  
I rush to seize it—unseen spirits thrust  
My worn frame on to its eternal marching :  
E'en proffer'd food turns on my lips to dust.

If from the bubbling fount I stoop to drink,  
Back into earth the troubled waters sink.

Day gone, the sun sinks low, the vesper pealing,  
Calls to meek prayer. All heavy labour done,  
On gentle, languid plumes, repose comes stealing,  
And all things weary, rest beneath the sun.  
Ah ! e'en the goaded ox and galley-slave,  
But I in vain this gift of God must crave.

The bird beneath tired wing its head is hiding ;  
The babe is slumb'ring on its mother's breast ;  
The good and pure in safety are abiding ;  
And some—oh joy !—have won eternal rest.  
I, bearing ages of unrest and pain,  
I, sleepless, deathless, plead for both in vain.

Thou art not man, oh God ! that thou shouldst  
treasure  
Vengeance through centuries, so fierce to burn :  
When wilt Thou come ? When will it be Thy  
pleasure,  
From me the fury of Thy wrath to turn ?

"On till I come!" I know Thy words are sure;  
How long, O Lord! how long must I endure?

Come! earth is groaning 'neath her fearful burden.

Come! man and beast take up the doleful wail;  
Come! Thy belovèd ones await their guerdon;

Come! faith, and hope, and love, all well-nigh  
fail.

I, too, light-dazed, *then* to Thy feet will creep,  
And cling till Thou dost bless me, and I sleep.

---

### THE LAST HOUR OF THE YEAR.

FAREWELL, old year, farewell!  
Loved mem'ries are entomb'd with thee;  
Sweet dreams, like sprigs of rosemarie  
Are carried to the grave with thee—  
Farewell, old year, farewell!

They ring thy passing bell,  
And as its muffled tones boom by,

The lovely forms of fancy fly,  
And hope, that near'd reality,  
Is held, as by a spell.

Farewell, loved year, farewell !  
Keep closely folded to thy breast—  
Hold ever, in unbroken rest—  
Guard time-long from all prying quest—  
That which we loved so well.

We do not ask it back—  
The flow'r-wreath pluck'd when thou wert young,  
The triumph-song, joy, rapt'rous sung—  
The winnow'd pearls, thread-golden strung—  
Now scatter'd on thy track.

Nay, bear thy spoils with thee !  
The lost, the loved, the tinsel, gold ;  
Hide them within thy shroud's thick fold  
To perish ; ours we deathless hold,  
Embalm'd in memory.

Pass on ! 'tis very well !  
Though on each life thou'st left thy trace—  
Some deeper lines, some added grace ;

Some new-fill'd nook, or vacant place ;  
Some marks by which to note thy race,  
Now passing—past. Farewell !

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## WRITTEN IN SAND.

Down by the sea roam'd a youth and a maiden,  
The sunrise before them—the night-cloud behind;  
The tide rolling in with its treasures rich laden,  
And day's birth-rejoicings attuning the wind.

"Wilt thou be true?" ask'd the maiden, soft sighing :—  
Low at her feet knelt the youth on the strand—  
"Ay ! unto death !" and e'en in replying  
He traced the fond vow in the glittering sand.

Down by the sea roam'd the maiden heart-broken = ;  
Moan'd the wind to the night, moan'd the sea to —  
the land ;  
Ebbing waves long had smooth'd out that love —  
token ;  
What would you, oh maiden ! 'twas written in —  
sand.

## WHITHER ?

UPON the trembling air, sweet song  
 Is borne in wavering tide along ;  
 Yet, let each note be sad, or gay,  
 Or high, or low, all speed away—

Oh, whither ?

No matter ! though th' impassion'd theme  
 Brought to lone hearts some vanish'd dream ;  
 Or waken'd bitter thoughts to light,  
 Swift as an arrow is its flight—

Oh, whither ?

On ocean's breast, from pole to pole,  
 Where sunlight sleeps, or dark waves roll,  
 The shatter'd spars, the hull, the mast,  
 Of countless wrecks float ever past—

Oh, whither ?

Through boundless realms of unknown space  
 The wand'ring stars in furious race

Dash on our eyes their trail of light,  
Then onward plunge in frenzied flight—  
    Oh, whither?

When bright flow'rs bloom, and sunshine plays  
O'er hill and stream, the wild birds' lays  
Come thrilling from the azure sky,  
But wintry winds must speed them by—  
    Oh, whither?

And oft we meet in joy or pain,  
And pray to part with ne'er again—  
Eyes soft and kind, hearts true and strong,  
Yet while we plead time bears them on—  
    Oh, whither?

And these who dwell with us to-day ;  
And those we lost but yesterday ;  
This restless earth ; nay ! all that be—  
Speed they not on unceasingly—  
    Oh, whither ?

## PEN-POLE POINT.

THE sun setting over the channel  
That cleaveth our western shore,  
And paving the waters so sombre erewhile  
With a golden burnish'd floor,  
And warmly caressing the mountains  
As if he would see them no more.

The heat-pulse throbbing and beating,  
Though all th' encircling air  
That thrill'd, and glow'd, and heaved, yet lay  
Entranced in the sun's red glare,  
Passion-smitten and madden'd ;  
Free, yet a captive there.

Never a sound in the stillness ;  
Never a cloud in the sky ;  
Never a shadow of fear ahead ;  
Never a danger to fly ;  
Never a hint of consuming care,  
Nor the echo of a sigh.

Swelling woods o'er the headlands ;  
Mansions bosom'd in trees ;  
Shelving banks to the river  
Winding through wooded leas ;  
Emerald meadows far-stretching  
Out to the salt sea-breeze.

Sloping up from the village  
Down in the valley below,  
Stands a headland, landward veil'd in meads,  
Seaward with rocky brow ;  
Like an untamed heart, all love to its friends,  
And bitter and hard to its foe.

There, 'mid the glow of the sunset,  
'Mid the golden, hazy air,  
Sat a maiden and youth in the first warm flush  
Of a love that was far more fair,  
Whence no sullyng touch had brush'd the bloom,  
Though it grew in a world of care.

"Dost thou see yon bark on the waters ?  
Like a pearl in a golden band ;

“ Oh, would we were there ! sweet love !” said he ;  
“ And I held thee heart and hand,  
To drift, and drift, in the golden haze,  
Away to some fairy-land.

“ I would we were there together,  
Away on the ebbing tide ;  
And to-day, and to-morrow, and ever,  
I might linger unchid by thy side ;  
With this dread lest some fiend should thrust us  
apart,  
Lull’d to death in the smile of my bride.”

“ And wouldst thou ne’er weary ?” she faltered,  
“ Weary of sunshine and me ?”  
He lay at her feet, and he gazed in her eyes—  
His own were as blue as the sea—  
“ I might weary of sunshine and joy,” he cried,  
“ But never ! I swear it, of thee.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Tempest and gloom o’er the channel,  
On a fierce and wintry day ;

And never a sunbeam to brighten and cheer,  
And never a light on the bay,  
Only where under the rifted clouds  
The vivid lightnings play.

Never a hope for the maiden !  
Never a gleam in her sky !  
She hath loved with a love that changeth not,  
And *his* love has gone by.  
Heart-broken, desolate, alone,  
She hath wander'd here to die.

---

## AUTUMN.

THERE is a whisper in the stirring woods,  
And in the valleys, murmurs. Up the glades,  
And smooth green forest-aisles, a messenger  
Is speeding breathlessly ; the woodland flower  
Droops down to listen ; to the pool's dark breast,  
Through rifted boughs, the moonlight rushed to tell  
The lotus-lily ; all the flowering reeds  
Shiver, and rustle nervously ; the fern



Waves to and fro ; the foxglove nods, and rings  
Sweet mellow chimes, for—is not Autumn near ?  
Already are her heralds all abroad,  
Wearing her gorgeous liv'ries ; banners bright,  
Blazon'd with dazzling hues, and fairly dight  
With 'wildering designs, float gracefully ; afar  
We catch the gleaming of her broider'd robes  
A-flutter in the wind. A queen, she comes !  
Large, grand, and bounteous, full-lipped, rich of hue ;  
Low-brow'd, broad-breasted, soft, voluptuous ;  
Teeming with sensuous life—like her of old  
Whom Antony fell slave to—warm and full,  
The rounded mellowness of supple limb  
And lithe and billowy form. Slumbrous and dark  
The hazy half-veil'd eyes whose lifted light  
Burns like a purple sunset ; in their warmth  
All nature glows to ripeness ; vine-enwreath'd  
Her vein-laced temples ; all her hair, athwart  
The amber sky, is blown in filmy clouds ;  
Her feet—from crush'd grape-clusters ruddy dyed—  
Tint, as they pass, the herbage. From her blush—  
The sun's hot gaze calls up—the foliage wins  
Its crimson glory ; from her od'rous sigh  
The peach, and nect'rine, pine, and every fruit,

Catch all their lusciousness. Where she doth tear,  
In her swift race, her tender limbs, the thorn  
And bramble catch the ruby drops to stain  
Their myriad berries. What her hands caress,  
Though but a stone, wins beauty. Doth she laugh?  
The woods are music. Doth she smile? The earth  
Bathes it in joy-light. Doth she weep? Behold!  
Her tears grow lakelets blue, 'twixt mountains lone,  
Whence happy brooks low wander, making rich  
Green meadows down below. Or is she sad?  
Earth dons her greyest robes. But is she gay?  
Nature doth prank herself in golden gear,  
Whence flash the fiery ruby, emerald,  
Topaz, and amethyst, and each bright gem  
To do her honour. Fruity odours cling  
About the drowsy air. Deep in the woods,  
Around the trees' rough roots, soft mosses lay  
Their feathery palm-like leaves, lest her fair feet  
Should trip and wound themselves. Late violets blue  
Breathe faint sweet perfumes. All the earth, and sky,  
And sea, glow deeper, richer, tints, that were,  
Deepen to mellow colours. Dulcet song—  
From birds that in the spring seem'd crush'd, and  
wrung

Out of their swelling hearts by joy so great  
In its sweet agony, 'twas keen as pain—  
Now flows low, rich, and gushing, as the fount  
Fed by some mountain-stream, flows over moss,  
And slips away in tenderness. O Queen !  
Queen of the year ! benignant ! bountiful !  
Blessing the earth with plenty ; giving back  
The hopes we scatter'd earthward in the spring,  
Full-statured to fruition—hail to thee !  
Welcome ! thrice welcome ! crowning perfect faith  
Everywhere thousand-fold with rich reward.  
Teaching us thus, through fair and sensuous things,  
The harvest waiting yet a higher faith.

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## GRIEF.

HUG not thy grief too closely ; leave it free  
To go when nature prompts—for go it should—  
As full-fledged nestling whom no more the wood  
Yields bountiful supplies to. Let it be  
Gently shone down by cheerfulness of mood.

Night gives the glow-worm beauty ; fair sunrise  
Shows it a crawling earth-worm. So doth grief,  
'Mid the soul's gloom, strike falsely on our eyes ;  
After, when joylight riseth, it shall show  
The relic of a selfish love, no more.  
Fresh gathered was the manna good, but lo !  
Garner'd, corruption's direst forms it bore.

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## LINES.

PEACE ! flutt'ring heart !  
Why wilt thou weary thus thyself in vain,  
By probing wounds, just healing o'er again ;  
Canst thou not rest ?  
Once there was room enough for thee  
Within the breast.

Peace ! flutt'ring heart !  
Or, wilt thou never more strive hard to quell  
The mem'ry of this dream, which as a spell,  
Clouds thy life's day ?  
Come ! rouse thee ! gather strength to crush this woe  
Or it will live alway.

Peace ! flutt'ring heart !  
Why dost thou, like the troubled, rock-girt sea,  
But chafe, and fret—not striving to be free—  
And weakly sigh ?  
Ah ! craven heart ! to thus inertly pine ;  
Live free ! or die !

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## THE CUCKOO.

CUCKOO ! once long ago, when life beat high  
In passion throbs, I hail'd thy welcome cry  
As jubilant ; but now it seems a sigh.

“Cuckoo !”  
—An April day with quick’ning show’rs,  
That woo’d the tender shoots to test life’s pow’rs,  
And kiss’d the germs to buds, the buds to flow’rs.

“Cuckoo !”  
—The sob and gush, the wail, and moan,  
Of wind careering all the day alone,  
Dropp’d down as day declined to tender tone.

“Cuckoo !”

—The evening came ; the drip and rush  
Of raindrops ceased, and in the welcome hush,  
Out-pour’d from hawthorn-spray the song of thrush.

“Cuckoo !”

—The sweet-briar, thyme, and daffodil  
Shook out their perfume ; up the distant hill  
Away the mist stole rapidly and still.

“Cuckoo !”

—Afar o'er breezy downs we sped,  
All diamond-strewn, the path where fancy led,  
All jewel-deck'd the branches overhead.

“Cuckoo !”

—Thro' tender meads, where primrose pale,  
Sweet violet, and cowslip scent the gale  
Sighing o'er billowy slopes down to the vale.

“Cuckoo !”

—The clouds like tatter'd banners black,  
All gore-bedabbled, waved yet far aback,  
Though golden sunshine stream'd upon our track.

“Cuckoo !”

—Ay ! downward through the riven blue  
We heard thy first note break in promise true  
Of joyous spring to all our fond hearts knew.

“Cuckoo !”

—For so we deem’d it ; hand in hand,  
Heart link’d to heart, we thought we took our stand  
For evermore within love’s promised land.

“Cuckoo !”

—We listen’d mute, till overhead  
Thy cry grew distant : then the sunset shed  
A glow of anger round us—What had fled ?

“Cuckoo !”

—The eve descended cold, and gray,  
Gone love, and light ; gone joy, and passion-lay,  
And we divided, trod a darken’d way.

“Cuckoo !”

—Love’s day is gone ! love’s sun is set !  
Long years have strewn their snows between, and yet,  
Now at thy note mine eyes with tears are wet.

“Cuckoo !”

—For still I seem to hear love’s tone,  
I am caress’d, beloved ;—then with a groan  
I start and wake, to know I am alone.

“Cuckoo !”

—Yes ! cuckoo ! thou may’st float and sing,  
Waving through bow’rs of bloom thy joyous wing,  
And follow round the earth eternal spring.

“Cuckoo !”

—But only once the heart can know  
Love’s sweet spring-time, though may be we shall go  
Through summer heat oft-time, and winter’s snow.

“Cuckoo !”

—And yearn, and cry, yet know ’tis vain ;  
Till life’s brief journey o’er, we wake again  
Where love’s unclouded spring for aye shall reign.

## POETRY.

## PART I.—THE POET TO HIS MUSE.

A SOMETHING bids me sing, and I prepare  
 With trembling hands to wake again my lute,  
 But all its thrilling melody is flown,  
 Its silver strings are tangled, torn, and mute.

Once in the days long past I could have sung  
 A lay not all unworthy of the theme ;  
 But now amidst song's scatter'd chords I stand  
 Like one who strives to grasp a vanish'd dream.

Oh ! dear inspirer of my many lays  
 Come back and thrill again my yearning breast ;  
 I hate this voiceless calm, this tuneless void,  
 I weary for thy passionate unrest.

I yearn for thy low warbling, through the hard  
 Prosaic world as travel-worn I toil ;  
 Repulsed by cold ; chill'd by the clammy mists ;  
 Wounded, and heart-sore ; cumber'd by the soil.

Come back my beautiful ! I yearn for thee,  
Oh, fire from heaven ! passion-breathing song !  
Let all my being, thrilling through to thee,  
Pulsate thy measures healthfully and strong.

## PART 'II.—RETROSPECTIVE.

Am I not thine ? my heart did ope to thee  
As violets open to the kiss of spring ;  
A babe, I lull'd me to thy melody,  
A child, with babbling lips I strove to sing.

In youth I wander'd far away with thee,  
Where every thought bears bud and blossom  
sweet ;  
Where joy's dawn-mist, and woe's night-tears, con-  
geal'd  
To showers of gems flash rainbows round our  
feet.

Later ; rich clustering fruit burst forth, and hung  
Betwixt me and the azure of my sky ;  
And golden grain waved like the glitt'ring sea  
Fresh rippled up beneath a sunset sigh.

Each fountain had its naiad then, each grove  
Its troop of dryads ; and each limpid stream,  
Drain'd from snow-mountains, purl'd undyingly  
To poet-ears an ever-welcome theme.

For us there was no void ; for fancy spread  
Her brooding wings above it, and young life  
Quicken'd, and throbb'd, and glow'd, and shaped  
itself  
To form, and face, and feature, beauty rife.

'With feet hope-sandall'd, and with wings joy-ray'd,  
Came trooping all the progeny of time ;  
From depth to depth, down thro' the vaulted blue,  
Tuning their laughter to a silver chime.

Over the past a sunset-glow was spread,  
In which the harshest and the plain show'd fair ;  
And things beloved and treasured now no more  
Mellow'd and melted into fondness there.

The present was all gladness, but beyond  
The rich and bounteous view that intervened,

The future, with the promise of all gifts,  
From ev'ry rising fear my heart redeem'd.

The future ! ah ! the shrouding folds hung close  
Above it ; but the struggle and the strife  
That heaved, and sway'd beneath them surely told  
The battle that was waging there for life.

Life ? ay ! and love, and joy, and hope, and pow'r;  
And every good that mortal man can know ;  
And through the swaying of the misty veil  
I imaged out each quiv'ring passion-throe.

I welcomed them ; they were the parent-pangs  
At birth of prodigies, that should be mine ;  
Previsions, shadowings-out of things to be,  
Whose voices should sound on throughout all  
time.

But *now* ! ah ! now I shudd'ring stand upon  
A mould'ring heap—the present of the past—  
Which nearing with slow steps by tortuous way  
I grasp'd and held ; and call'd it mine, at last.

Mine? ay! mine own, in all its barren truth ;  
Mine, hand to hand, and face to face ;  
That which I yearn'd for with a passion throb ;  
That which I struggled for in close-press'd race.

Mine—all and everything ; and sudden awe  
Fell on my soul, as clasping it full fleet—  
Behold ! it turn'd to ashes in my hand  
And mingled with the dust about my feet.

## PART III.—THE MUSE LEAVES HIM.

Then from my soul died out its light of life,  
And from my heart its happiness and glee ;  
And all the agony that thrill'd me through  
Drew but one cry—the parting one—from thee.

Yes ! thou wert gone, as utterly and sure  
As bee forsakes the flower in winter drear ;  
And in the cold grey twilight of joy's day  
I dared not hope the sorrow-mist would clear.

I watch'd it nearing, like a curling snake,  
All cold and clammy, wreathing round my heart,

Erasing all the ling'ring characters  
Thy hand had graven in its holiest part.

Ay ! from its temple-step and altar-top  
The hieroglyphic symbols waned away ;  
Where the bright flame leapt, and the incense  
sway'd  
The chilling serpent-mist in thick folds lay.

And silence, with her frozen finger press'd  
To frozen lip, kept watch and warden there :  
The brooding darkness shaped itself to Fear,  
And at the portal crouch'd harsh wrinkled ca-

#### PART IV.—THE AWAKENING.

But, something in this time of waking flow'rs  
Speaks in full whispers to my silent heart ;  
The quiv'ring pulse that through all nature beats  
In one great unison, hath made it start.

And almost with an agony comes back  
Its gush of quicken'd feeling, and its beat

Full, deep, and hopeful, sends through waking brain  
 The glow of life, with all its former heat.

Ay ! and thou too, my beautiful ! my best !  
 Thou who pervadest nature, thou, who art  
 The bloom on beauty ; element of love,—  
 Spirit of Poetry ! back to my heart !

Slow curdling through each vein-drop like that sent  
 By loved hand clasping loved hand, comes the  
 thrill  
 Of thy long look'd-for presence, and I wait,  
 Dumb with great joy, to do thy perfect will.

## PART V.—THE RETURN.

Ah ! thou art here, mine own ! yes ! once again !  
 Oh ! for a voice to sound eternally,  
 In language such as angels use, the thoughts  
 Thou wastest from the realms of melody.

Blown all abroad, like roses in fair morns,  
 By sunrise winds, they show'r around and lie,  
 A glow that wraps the earth to poet's ken ;  
 A rainbow path hence, upward to the sky.

## PART VI.—POETRY.

Oh gift of God ! so strong for good, or ill,  
    Oh ! glorious gift ! to reverence and love ;  
Stream, falling earthward from th' eternal fount ;  
    Fire, which Prometheus drew down from above.

Spirit ! sent out from God, to gather up  
    A something from each harmony that rings  
Throughout the mighty universe, where rush  
    The spinning worlds thou chasest with thy wings.

A something from each note that from the lip  
    Loud-ringing, or low-quiv'ring ever fell,  
Of man or seraph ; beast or living thing ;  
    From highest heaven, to earth ; and lowest hell.

A something from the tints that line the shell,  
    That dye each flow'r ; that flood the sunset sky ;  
Gleam in the changeful sea ; flash in each gem ;  
    Shade angels' wings and melt in woman's eye.

A something from each ecstasy of bliss ;  
    A something from each agony of woe—

The heart's heart crush'd ; the soul's life wrench'd  
away ;  
Love's madd'ning rapture, and despair's dull  
throe.

A something from each thought that ever thrill'd  
Through form material or spirit undefined,  
That wreath'd the dimples round the mouth of  
youth,  
Or brow of mighty sage with furrows lined.

A something from each accident of joy ;  
A something from each certainty of grief ;  
The prelude-thrill of bliss, to agony ;  
Delirium, madness ; bondage, and relief.

Something from all that has been, and that is,  
Oh glorious Poetry ! thou takest as thy right  
And blendest them, as sevenfold hues combined,  
Forming in highest heaven the pure white light.

What can be said enough of thee ? oh pure  
And tender radiance ! sunshine of life's day ;  
There is no heart however rough, and dim,  
But owes to thee some faint and struggling ray.

And though but one, it lights the braided threads  
 Which spun, or swift, or slow ; in peace, or strife,  
 Form yet the weft and woof, continuous  
 Of that existence here, we misname life.

## VII.—POETS.

And what of them—thy favour'd ones, who stand  
 In the unclouded splendour of thy ray ?  
 Ah ! these, when joy's bright sun on earth has set,  
 Still revel in the brightness of thy day.

These, like the swan, die singing ; like the lark,  
 Sing when press'd low to earth or mounting high,  
 They, phoenix-like, renew their strength in thee,  
 And in thee are immortal, though they die.

Priests of strange mysteries, but fully known  
 To genius God-inspired. Oh, Poets ! Kings  
 O'er realms unbounded by swift time or space ;  
 Unmeasured, e'en by Fancy's rapid wings.

Kings over priceless realms—the minds of men—  
 Sway'd here and there by ye ; as full-ear'd corn

By whisp'ring evening breeze, or fresh'ning gale,  
Or sudden bursting upward of the morn.

Oh ! Poets ! song-birds, bright-wing'd messengers,  
On rainbow pathways 'twixt the earth and sky ;  
Lays such as yours, from angel-harpings caught,  
At heaven's gate, even here can never die.

No, never ! while the soul can swell, and thrill,  
And quiver to the touch of joy or woe ;  
While glorious Poetry the power is thine  
Feeling's rich tide to loosen to full flow.

Sing, then ! your strength'ning lays upon the hills,  
While down below life's battle rages fast :  
Sing ! nerve the arm ! and fire the brain, and heart !  
Nor cease till heaven is won, and death is past.

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## CLARA.

(*Vide "Festus," page 499.*)

CLOSE, hold me close to thy strong heart, and true;  
 I'm stiff with cold, and drench'd with clinging dew;  
 Through gloom and misery to thee I fly ;  
 Shelter me ! love me ! for I faint ! I die !

Spread thy strong arms around, thy strength will be  
 Help to my weakness ; hope to misery.  
 Clasp my frail hand in thine, so strong to guide,  
 And now I ask no earthly good beside.

All that was fair and pleasant to my sight  
 Is whelm'd in darkness deeper than earth's night ;  
 All that I lean'd on, seeming good and true,  
 Have proved but broken reeds, and pierced me  
 through.

I lit by the dawning light of truth's glad morn—  
 Through all the dying world—awearily, lorn,  
 Sick with the countless sights of agony—  
 I fly through nature's death, to die by thee.

To die by thee, believing in thee yet  
As my one star, now every star has set ;  
Just as the traveller 'neath scorching skies  
Crawls to the rock, and 'neath its shelter dies.

To die by thee ! ay ! now earth's light has fled  
I go where skies with morning's light are red ;  
To die by thee ! ay ! when all earth goes by  
And heaven 's above, what is there but to die ?

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## DREAMS.

DREAMS ! gentle dreams ! ye like the snowflakes  
lade  
With bridal blossoms many a thorny spray :  
Dreams ! gentle dreams ! ye like the snowflakes  
fade,  
And melt in tender tears at light of day.

Captive ! in dungeon deep, too sad for weeping,  
Too long immured to count the years that fly,

Slumber's soft downy wing is o'er thee sweeping,  
Sleep ! and in dreams soar outward to the sky.

Wretch ! crimson-dyed in gilt, in horror shaded,  
Rest, fiery eye, and brain sin-sered, and dream  
How in One Light thy guilt and horror faded,  
Then wake, and let it be more than a dream.

Passionate soul ! outstretch'd in eager longing  
After the ideal realized, why moan  
Over the heavy mists your spirit wronging ?  
Sleep ! and in dreams grasp all things for your  
own.

Labourers hard ! in sorrow and affliction  
Struggling on bravely up life's troubled streams,  
Sleep breathes o'er you her sweetest benediction,  
And the unheard "Amen" she writes in dreams.

Yes ! gentle dreams ! wave rainbow wings above us,  
Smile kindly on us in our gloomy way ;  
Weave wreaths of hope ; bring nearer those who  
love us ;  
Give us our lost again ; nor pass till day.

Nor pass till day shall cleave that night of sorrow  
Which dreamless death will bind around the  
heart,  
And life's to-day, full-orb'd in life's to-morrow,  
Brings perfected what now we "know in part."

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## THE WANDERER.

WEAK hands, that grope in vain  
For guidance through the night ;  
Dim eyes, that strive in vain  
To pierce the gloom, to light :  
Bare, bleeding feet, that shrink from briar and stone ;  
And heart too terror-husht to utter sigh, or groan.

All the proud strength of mind  
In utter weakness lost ;  
All that could stay or bind  
Scatter'd, and tempest-toss'd :  
All airy fancies, dreams, and rip'ning joys  
Crumbled, and broken now, like worthless toys.

Wandering ! wandering on !

Out 'neath a starless sky.

Wandering ! wandering on !

Out to the wilds to die.

Hounded, and hunted, scared from haunts of men,  
Out to the lion's lair ; out to the wild wolf's den.

Beats on that humbled head

Rain, cruel, pitiless rain !

Drabbles each golden thread ;

Smites to the aching brain !

Ah ! all the torrents storms from rain-clouds wrench,  
The fiery burning there can never quench !

Swift comes the lightning's wing

Sweeping thy brow of shame ;

Burning thy anguish-smart

Out in a fiercer flame.

Hounded and hunted, so man's victim dies ;

"Saved as by fire," and gone, free, to the pitying  
skies.

## THE BRIDAL DAY.

THEY are decking the bride in her snowy array ;  
They have clasp'd her rich robe with a diamond  
spray,  
And placed on her forehead the orange-flow'r  
wreath,  
And the long misty veil floats in soft folds beneath ;  
And her maidens troop round her, and ask in their  
pride  
If the sun ever shone on a lovelier bride.

And the bridegroom ? He kneels in his chamber  
alone,  
His face white as ashes, his heart cold as stone ;  
For he thinks of a maiden once happy and gay,  
Whom the blight of his falsehood has wither'd  
away,  
And he moans in his agony, "Would I had died !  
Ere I barter'd her love for a proud, wealthy bride."

Cold ! cold lies the maiden ! the anguish of death  
Has gemm'd her fair forehead and thicken'd her  
breath ;

Yet she wastes the last effort of life's failing flame  
In blessings, and prayers, utter'd low with his  
name :

And when dewdrops fall thick o'er the flowers of  
the dell,

His wedding chimes clash with her passing-bell.

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### INGRATITUDE.

A LOWLY herb amid the grass  
In lusty vigour grew,  
Caress'd, and warm'd, by noon's bright sun,  
And fed by evening's dew.

The soft wind blew, the sweet rain fell,  
And grateful flowers around  
Raised burning hearts, and glowing eyes  
To heaven ; and kiss'd the ground.

But churlishly the herb refused  
Its meed of modest bloom ;  
Denied the vesper incense-wreath  
Its tribute of perfume.

Alas ! day set—need's stern, hard hand,  
The herb's stored wealth would steal ;  
And cold oppression crush'd it down  
Beneath its iron heel.

Then lo ! from gaping wound, and bruise,  
There rose upon the night  
Rich streams of perfume, grudged to love,  
By justice claim'd as right.

---

" FINIS."

" FINIS !" and so the book is done !  
To the latest word on the latest page  
I have read it through, with the reverence due  
To the work of a mighty sage.

And now, with a ling’ring touch of love,  
I close it, and fasten the ponderous hasp,  
And lay it by with a tender sigh,  
For the dust and the darkness to clasp.

Close it ! and clasp it ! and lay it by  
While the burning words which therein are writ  
Are kindling light in my waking brain,  
Whence the shudd’ring shadows flit.

Close it ! and clasp it ! and lay it to rest,  
Side by side, with a hundred more,  
Where the shadow and sunbeam alike will glide,  
Morn and eve, from ceiling to floor.

Much have I learnt, though ’twas read by me  
’Mid the mists and gloom of uncertain night ;  
But he who would fathom its depths of lore  
Must read it in broad noon-light.

Fold him ! and clasp him ! and lay him by !  
’Tis a book that was writ by the finger of God,  
This slumb’ring piece of humanity,  
O’er which we are heaping the sod.

Many have read him, but none aright,  
Because of the blinding shadows of sin  
Which blurr'd, and blacken'd the simple truth  
Of that without, and within.

But fold him ! and clasp him ! and lay him to sleep  
'Mid the ranks of that quiet resting-place ;  
When we meet him again we shall read him aright  
With heaven's broad light on his face !

---

## THE CHANGELING.

ONE fair May-day gone by  
My path lay through rich meads, where brightest  
flowers  
Did incense in and out, through sun and showers,  
The hours that fly.

Above my head the lark,  
A black speck in the azure, threw around  
A spangled show'r of soft, and liquid sound,  
Out-wrung from music's heart.

Amid the milk-white thorn  
The nightingale's delicious songs did flow,  
As over cheek and brow the crimson glow  
Floodeath a love new born.

My every step there crush'd  
From herb, or leaf, or flower, a perfume sweet—  
That clung in powder'd gold about my feet,—  
And bloom from berries brush'd.

And just below, the sea  
With mighty throb, did to the whole beat time ;  
With mighty voice did to the whole still rhyme  
In deep, full harmony.

And suddenly, from air,  
Or earth, or sea, or heaven—I never knew—  
A strange, small bird, unto my bosom flew,  
And fondly nestled there.

And through the sunny light,  
And dewy eve, and haunted twilight grim ;  
And through the starry night and day-dawn dim,  
And through the sunrise bright,

To sultry noon again,  
And on through days, and weeks, and months, I  
bore  
My stranger guest ; and gave it of my store  
Of widely gather'd grain.

And to my throbbing heart  
Its chill'd one press'd, and from each ruffled plume  
The earth-stain wash'd, and stroked away the gloom,  
Healing its every smart.

I noted well the day  
When first its wings, low rustling in my breast,  
Warn'd me that gather'd strength would bring  
unrest ;  
I felt their flutt'ring play.

I heard its faint, low moan ;  
Its tender plaint—when hastening to plume  
Its burnish'd feathers—oh ! the cry for “room !”  
Was in that pleading tone.

I felt its pinions beat  
Day after day, upon my bosom bare

So bruised and gored ; beheld it tread the air  
With eager, stronger feet.

And so it gain'd full strength ;  
And from the very heart that nursed it tore  
The quiv'ring flesh, and dipp'd its beak in gore,  
And flew at length,

Away towards the sun,  
With pinions beating still, ere they up-rose  
The heart that shelter'd it from all its woes  
When life was young.

Away, with fierce bright eye  
Set firmly on the scorching noonday sun  
Unblinkingly ; its upward course begun  
As though it ne'er could die.

I never clogg'd its powers,  
Why should I ? If it wearied of its rest,  
Why let it fly with ever-growing zest  
For fadeless bowers.

Should I a tether throw  
To bind what yearn'd for freedom ? should I see

This treasured nursling pine in slavery ?

No ! by all justice, no !

Ah ! then 'mid heaven's clear light  
 I knew it for the thing it was ; it show'd  
 No more of timid dove ; it blazed and glow'd  
 A golden eaglet bright.

Up to the sun soar on !  
 Up to the sun ! go gaze, and eddy round !  
 Whirl thyself madly o'er the earth's far bound !  
 Wrestle ! and mount ! grow strong !

Never descend to earth !  
 When weary, on some broider'd cloudlet mount ;  
 When thirsty, drink from some aërial fount,  
 Where rainbows have their birth.

And I—what shall I do ?  
 "A time for all things !" therefore now I rest,  
 Till the wounds heal, late gash'd into my breast,  
 Then so will I up too.

Ay ! on the upward way !  
 To the cleft hills where cisterns are, whence flow

The rills that quench'd my soul's thirst until  
now,  
To dawning of life's day.

Who thinks that I can lie  
With wounds deep-rankling, and with spirit bow'd ;  
Life's purpose wither'd ; soul wrapp'd in dark  
cloud ?  
No ! I must live ! or die !

And what is it to live ?  
To will ; to do, to utmost, what is right ;  
To battle ; conquer ill, to climb to light ;  
This is the life I'll live.

---

## THE MEMORIES OF THE HEART.

We may shred the moss-veil from the rose,  
The blossom from the spray ;  
The bloom that pearls the luscious grape  
A touch may brush away.

The vine may loosen from the tree  
Which once it clung to fast—  
But the heart will keep its memories  
Till life itself be past.

The gold must die from sunset skies,  
The purple from far hills ;  
The foam-flow'rs fade from opal waves,  
Drought hush the babbling rills :  
The earth grow cold and passionless  
'Neath winter's bitter blast—  
But the heart will keep its memories  
Till life itself be past.

The flush will fade from cheek and brow,  
The sweet smile wane and die ;  
The freshness leave the coral lip,  
Tears dim the brightest eye.  
Youth, beauty, hope, and happiness,  
And love, may die at last—  
But the heart will keep its memories  
Till life itself be past.

## SUNDOWN.

Out of the western skies the sun's last beams are  
dying,  
And in the deep hush'd glow the dimpled land is  
lying ;  
And the sea's wreath'd head on the shore lies at  
rest,  
As an infant asleep on its mother's breast ;  
And the wind floats onward sighing.

Out of my sad, lone heart, hopes, sunny hopes, are  
paling,  
And every fountain of joy is slowly, but surely  
failing ;  
And the waves of thought that cheer'd me, sleep  
On the sea of grief so dark and deep ;  
And my spirit yields to wailing.

### THE LOST JEWEL.

Lost ! lost ! lost ! a diamond rich and rare ;  
 The sun blazed high in the noonday sky  
 When it fell from a bosom fair,  
 And scatter'd a thousand arrows of light,  
 Cutting through golden air.

Lost ! lost ! lost ! into circles of widening space  
 It sped in a blaze from the yearning gaze,  
 On its outward, and onward race ;  
 Yet back from the depths its trail still lit  
 The dying hope on one face.

Lost ! lost ! lost ! for ever and evermore !  
 On the tear-blurr'd sight falls that mocking light,  
 And time's waves, with their ceaseless roar,  
 Echo back, how in music, and radiance, it smote  
 On the sands of eternity's shore.

Lost ! lost ! lost ! the last ray flickers red,  
 And there comes a night to the straining sight,

And the calm of despair to the head.—

Oh heart ! why harbour the corpse of Love ?

We needs must cast forth our dead !

---

TO — — .

Low at thy feet

Let me lie down, dear lady ; sore oppress'd

With care and sorrow, here I come for rest,

Give it me sweet !

It needs no will,

No active power of thine ; no strong control ;

Be just thyself, and let thy placid soul

Brood o'er me still.

No word ! no sound !

No trick of voice or gesture ; all is known

From heart to heart, that unto each has flown

And union found.

Did not that plead,  
My first unutter'd passion-cry, which fell  
A throbbing surge-beat in thy heart's deep cell ?  
Telling my need.

I do not care  
What the charm is thy presence round me throws,  
What the spell is my troubled spirit knows  
And thrills to there.

How can I tell—  
Now with this fleshly mantle round my soul,  
What tender visions of a brighter goal  
May work their spell.

May be like air,  
Fine drawn as golden lyre, it swells and thrills,  
To echoes from the everlasting hills  
Of worlds more fair.

I know I feel  
Calm, such as dewy eve draws o'er hot skies  
When quench'd in western seas day's red torch lies,  
And sweetly steal—

Out from deep glades  
The cool, delicious zephyrs, breathing balm ;  
Sweet dews to moisten fever'd lip and palm,  
And gentle shades.

At peace, and hush'd,  
My fever'd heart droops down, to idly float  
In gladness, as within a beam the mote  
Sometime sore crush'd.

And so I lie,  
Here at thy feet, and gaze my full at thee,  
Lull'd, sooth'd and pleased, as by the melody  
Of wind-harp's sigh.

Thou art to me—  
A rich, deep chord, once struck, still echoing back  
For evermore, upon its quivering track,  
Full sympathy.

Pour on me, pour !  
All the sweet sadness of those wondrous eyes,  
All their mute language, all their quick replies ;  
All their love-lore.

So!—now I rest  
In thy bright joylight, as a cloudlet lies  
Floating through golden flood of sunset skies,  
Down to the west.

---

## SONG TO NIGHT.

DEW-LADEN Night ! pass by !  
Bear on thy shadowy wing  
All the cool breezes sigh ;  
All that the night-winds sing.

Pass ! that earth's flowers may ope  
Eyes that have slumber'd long.  
Pass ! that their lays may cope  
With thy mysterious song.

Pass ! yield the palm, dark queen !  
To the young bright-eyed morn.  
Pass ! in thy state serene !  
Room ! for thy eldest born !

Pass with thy sadd'ning pow'r !

She of the lustrous brow,

Morn, with her glorious dow'r,

Cometh all regal now.

Pass ! Night ! a queen no more,

With muffled tread pass by !

Gather thy robe's dark folds

Closer to thee, and fly !

---

## LINES

*To One who said he intended to become a Poet.*

AND thou wouldst be a Poet ? and uplift

Thy voice as such, above the crashing din

That thunders through the world ? But dost thou  
know

What 'tis to be a Poet ? Hast thou thought

If man doth make the Poet or if God ?

What are his duties ?—singing birds have theirs—

His pains and penalties ? if fail he should—

As sometimes fail he must. What are his dues ?—

If by good chance he gain them. One hath said—  
“ The Poet’s born such, and not made ! ” Why then  
The reed’s a flute while it doth grow low down  
Among the clinging mud ! May be it is !  
Unknowing its sweet destiny, it draws  
Good from the evil ’neath it, and uplifts  
To every breeze from heaven its eager leaves  
That flutter out the prelude of sweet sounds  
To be hereafter. Then a master-hand  
Doth tear a green leaf here, another there,  
Lop down its feathery bloom, cut, gash, uproot,  
Bear it away, bend, warp, and hew it yet  
With keen and sure precision ; dry it up—  
The fresh green sap, that freely leapt throughout  
Its being once : smooth, twist, and torture down ;  
Curve, mould, and polish on, and on, until  
A something only of itself is all  
To know it by. And then the master fits  
The golden keys that modulate the tones—  
Which are its life developed—breathes therein  
His inspiration, and upleaps the soul,  
The living soul of all the harmony—  
That throbb’d and glow’d and beat within the flute  
While but a reed it grew low in the mud ;—

Comes full and rich ; or soft and sweet ; as cause  
Doth draw it forth ; comes wildly, gushing, shrill,  
Shrieking, or sobbing, thrilling, fluttering ;  
But whatsoe'er mark you ! *all* savouring,  
*All* breathing of the ordeal, and the pain,  
Which *shaped* and *moulded*—yet did not *create*—  
By pain and agony the sweet-voiced flute  
From out a mud-born reed ! And stranger lips,  
Though ne'er so soft they press, nor unskill'd hands,  
Can draw its deep heart-music : each must learn  
The trick of touch ; the thrill of sympathy ;  
The question, and response. The beating pulse  
Is one, that leaps between the master's hand  
And quickens into life the slumb'ring tones  
Within the instrument, to others dumb.—  
What thinkest thou ? Is not the Poet then  
A Poet too when yet a helpless babe  
He lies unthinking ? But for many a year  
The training must go on ; the trial by fire ;  
The agony of joy ; the madd'ning grief ;  
The dull continuous blows of sorrow, must  
Bruise, dry up, beat out, all the surplus drops  
From his wild heart. The cold, hard breath,  
Of adverse winds, must cool it down, and brace

Its nerves to firmness. Every incident  
However trifling seeming, must propel  
And bend him to one purpose. Presently,  
As the north wind in autumn thunders by  
Through dark'ning woods, and harps upon the trees ;  
So comes full inspiration—and he stands  
A poet God-endow'd for evermore.  
Yes ! evermore ! the world may dash along,  
Through all the mad vagaries of its age ;  
The pitiful may pity him ; the sad  
Gaze with weak eyes all tear-blurr'd at him ; some  
May stop their ears and hurry on ; some few  
May pause and listen eagerly ; the mass  
Pass all unheeding : what to him ? he sings  
As the birds sing—because perforce they must—  
It is their end and purpose—so 'tis his !—  
He has no choice. The thoughts come ready coin'd,  
And he, it seems, but utters them. No cause  
To wander here and there for subjects ; he  
Sings, writes, and versifies, of that which comes  
Pure down to him, as perfume from far beds  
Of night-blown flowers. Oh ! never bid him cease !  
And say his words are useless. Tiny seeds  
Float here and there—we deem but purposeless—

Upon the fickle wind ; but trees grow up  
From such dropp'd earthward. Rather, bid him sing  
And help us in this hard, prosaic age,  
To keep the heart's best feelings unobscured.  
Ah ! Poets sing to us ! and make us strong  
When we wax faint and weary ! speak to us  
Words full of fire, to rouse us from the dust  
Where in our apathy of grief we fall,  
And falling, weakly struggle till we die.  
Write words of wisdom for us ! Teach us truth,  
Which we may better learn from you than those  
Sterner and colder teachers. Wreathe your flowers  
About the ruin'd temples of our hopes,  
Then heedless of the rottenness within  
We still may think them lovely, and forget  
In time, what once they *were*, but loving them  
For what they are.—Into thy heart then look  
Deeper than in thy brain, ere scattering far  
Over the world's field, thoughts word-wing'd, as seeds  
To grow, and bear, or grain or tares, on, on,  
In crops continuous throughout all time.  
Pause ! art thou Poet ?—sing to us ! Art not ?—  
Thou canst not make thyself one—  
Hold thee still !

## SONG.

Row ! boatman ! row me !  
Over the blue sea ;  
Let me for once be  
Free as a wave.  
There to its soft chime  
Let my sad heart rhyme,  
As in long past time  
Ere life grew grave.

Row ! boatman ! row me !  
Where lilies sweetly  
Sleep on the fair sea,  
There let me rest.  
For I am weary !  
All here is dreary !  
Wild sea, oh ! cheer me !  
As thou canst best.

## THE LOST ONE.

WHERE are the lips that bless'd me ?

Where ? tell me where !

The soft arms that caress'd me ?

The glitt'ring hair,

That like a golden vapour,

Fell o'er a face as fair ?

Where are the eyes, half drooping,

To hide their light ?

The trembling lash down-swooping,

Like plumes from night ;

Love's halo radiant glowing,

Making all darkness bright.

Where ?—Is the dewdrop clinging

To last year's rose ?

Where ?—Is the breeze still singing

That no more blows ?

Where ?—Do we seek the sunbeam

In night's repose ?

## THE HEART'S CRY.

Oh life ! oh love ! oh happiness !

Oh waking dreams ! that will not bless,  
In all your mocking tenderness,

Pass by ! pass by !

Oh life ! I quaff'd your crystal stream—

'Twas gall !—oh love ! I dreamt your dream  
And woke !—oh happiness ! your beam  
Flash'd but to die !

And now I crave one boon of heaven—

The last on earth that can be given—  
When every joy and hope is riven—

'Tis—rest ! sweet rest !

Rest for the brain ; rest for the heart ;

Rest for the tortured nerves that start  
Mangled, and rack'd, yet not to part

From the torn breast.

Oh ! is there not on earth one spot

Where we may rest, all pain forgot ?

Some cavern'd home ; some humble cot

To rest the head ?—

Only one spot, and that lies low ;  
 So calm, so deep, beneath the flow  
 Of human joy, and human woe—  
 "Tis—with the dead !

---

## A THOUGHT.

FULL many a scented flower hoards up its perfume  
 Too charily, nor lets the pleading air  
 Take from its closed-up censer, half the tribute  
 Due to the Power which placed such treasure there.  
 Alas ! such must be bruised, and riven,  
 To crush out what should have been given.

---

## LAY OF THE FLOWER-SPIRITS.

*(First Spirit.)*

BEAUTIFUL sister ! Away ! Away !  
 Aurora has opened the eyes of Day !  
 And though the dews to their fringes cling,  
 There's a sunny glow their depths within,  
 That will burst forth warm ere long.

*(Chorus of Spirits.)*

Then away ! Away ! to rosy bowers,  
And gather dews from the opening flowers,  
Ere the lark begins his song.

*(Second Spirit.)*

Beautiful sister ! oh haste thee ! haste !  
Ere the honey-bee the sweets can taste  
That lie so deep in the lily's bell ;  
For Zephyr's up and the tale will tell.  
So awake ! and come along !

*(Chorus of Spirits.)*

And away ! away ! to rosy bowers !  
And gather dews from the opening flowers,  
Ere the lark begins his song.

*(Third Spirit.)*

Beautiful spirits, awake ! and fly !  
For the sounds of mortal feet are nigh.  
Awake ! or I fear they will crush the flowers  
That Night must see in Titania's bowers,  
And then I fear for ye !

(*Chorus of Spirits.*)

So away ! away ! to rosy bowers,  
And gather gems from opening flowers,  
To birds' sweet minstrelsy.

---

### THE BITTER END.

“ FAREWELL ?” must it be so ?  
Is there no end but this,  
To all our dreams of joy,  
Dawning to waking bliss,  
That never could deceive or cloy—  
The end !—this long, last kiss ?

We, who together braved  
All cruelty and scorn ;  
Who held us leal and true,  
Though desolate and lorn,  
Doubt’s twilight, and hate’s night all through,  
We ! thus to part at morn ?

There is no *fate*, we know !  
Yet *what* has driven us here ?  
With nothing but the bitter end  
Forced in upon our fear :  
With nothing, but the words that rend  
The hearts they doom, to hear.

We who held close in grief ;  
Closer in death and woe ;  
Clouds, gloom, and sickness had no power  
To dim our love-light glow—  
Now flowers and fruit our path embower,  
Shall we loose hands and go ?

Is it for this ? for this ?  
We gave up all beside ?  
Oh, would that in our bliss  
We had together died !  
Ere joy's bright dreams awoke to sorrow ;  
And love's day set, to know no morrow.

## SYMPATHY.

THE yearning sky bends low  
 Its bosom to the sea,  
 Whose fond heart all aglow  
 Throbs back full sympathy ;  
 Whelming therein all murmurs lone,  
 Till smile, and frown, and hue, and tone,  
 Of sky and sea, melt into one.

The cloud-hills piled on high  
 Roll their pealing chorals on ;  
 And the mountains here reply  
 With full echoes of the song.  
 From heaven to earth the thunders roll,  
 And chord to chord yields sweet control ;  
 A psalm of unity the whole.

Forests to forests call,  
 And ocean unto ocean maketh moan,  
 And o'er the pine trees tall  
 The wind sweeps down to wake the wild reed's  
 tone ;

Night calls to dawn, and dawn, with sweet surprise,  
Whispers in tender accents soft replies,  
And melts in light, and love, 'mid day's full rise.

Whisper to whisper thrills ;  
Voice unto voice makes melody ; and song,  
Gathering as little rills  
To mighty rivers, sweeps full-flooded on :  
The surf chafes answer from the coral reef,  
The breeze response wins from the aspen-leaf,  
And grief from grieving list'ner gains solace brief.

Eye melts to eye, and tells  
More than the tongue hath language to reveal :  
Heart weaves o'er heart such spells  
As life-long agony can ne'er repeal ;  
But mind, that answers true to asking mind ;  
And soul, that wakes to soul, as harp to wind,  
Once found, what more on earth is there to find ?

---

## THE NIGHT WATCH.

“TWELVE?—methinks the weary hours  
Pass but slowly by :  
Seconds go from here with tears,  
Minutes bear a sigh.

Hush’d is all  
'Neath night’s pall,  
Calm’d mysteriously !

“Hark! did some one speak?—’tis strange!  
There! again that tone!—  
Nay! ’tis but the raindrops’ fall;  
With a feeble moan  
Hasten they  
On their way,  
Dull, yet not alone!

“Cruelly the wind roams round  
Every ruin’d tower;

Blossoms leave their place of birth !  
Leaves forsake their bower !  
Pass away !  
As ye may !  
Earth but has her dower.

“Lowers the grim sky overhead,  
Frowning, still, and dark ;  
And the pale moon trembling floats,  
Like some white-wing’d bark,  
O’er the wave  
Which will lave  
Every silv’ry spark.

“Dark ! all dark ! and death so near,  
Hov’ring o’er his prey.  
Grief, thy night is all too long !  
Would that it were day !”—  
So do I  
Join thy cry,  
Lone one !—Would ’twere day !

## FLOWER SYMBOLS.

**GARLAND** the royal rose for the locks of youth,  
 Circle the lily-crown for the brows of truth.

Twine ! deftly twine !  
 For the festal dance and song,  
 Tendrils and vine.  
 Wreathe folly's tresses among  
 Gay columbine.

Fashion forget-me-not, with its hopeful blue,  
 Into true lovers'-knots, for the faithful few.

Shred the bloom  
 From white-starr'd jasmine-flowers  
 O'er the tomb  
 Where the infant of days, and hours,  
 Sleeps in gloom.

Drink, from the chalice pure of the lotus-flow'r,  
 Drink of the nectar-dew, at the witching hour,  
 To thy love :

Lay its buds to their sweet unrest

High above,

On the fairer bloom of her breast,

Ne'er to rove.

Mingle the pomegranate bloom and the jasmine  
flow'r,

And the heliotrope, and the rose for the bridal  
bow'r.

Myrtle fair,

And the orange-blossom pale,

Rich and rare ;

And the lily of the vale,

For brides' hair.

Over the newly dead strew all blossoms white ;  
Into the open grave cast the snowdrop bright.

Over the sod

Cruelly hiding our own,

Leave to nod

Amaranth flowers, which alone

Are immortal as God !

## COMFORT.

AH ! tender heart ! crush'd low,  
 Yield not to hopeless woe  
     In thy dark strife.  
 How shall I comfort thee,  
 Knowing that misery  
     Stifles thy life ?

Think ! while we cry for “ light ! ”  
 Blind groping through the night  
     Along life's way,  
 Slippery, tortuous, rough—  
 Know we not well enough  
     It leads to Day ?

Oh ! the full beat and throb,  
 Pulsing 'neath sigh and sob,  
     Grief from thee wrings ;  
 Promise that brave and true  
 Thou shalt thy strength renew  
     “ As eagles' wings.”

Comes back to frozen stream  
Darting the bright sunbeam,  
Bidding rejoice !  
Foam-flow'r bells wreath and ring ;  
Silver waves dance and sing,  
With laughing voice.

Under the cumbering snow  
Sweet tender flow'rets grow,  
With love all rife ;  
Melting by perfumed breath,  
Kissing their way through death  
Out into life.

Never was cloud so black,  
But close upon its track  
Follow'd the light.  
Never was night so dark,  
But far or near, some spark  
Beckon'd aright.

Over the deep morass  
Waves silver cotton-grass  
Slenderly frail.

Down where the reeking sod  
 Quivers, a shudd'ring bog,  
 Green grasses trail.

Sad heart ! awake thy powers !  
 Earth still hath all her flowers ;  
 And ocean blue  
 Holds its fair pearls ; and night  
 Keeps still her stars ; and Light  
 Proves heaven is true.

---

## SONG.

LET us be gay ! let us be gay !  
 Life should be bright as a fair summer's day !  
 Others may sigh, sigh spring away !  
 We will be glad as the sweet flow'rs of May—  
 Cheer'd by the sun and light,  
 Fed by the dews of night ;  
 Fearing nor storm nor blight ;  
 Heat, nor decay ;



Casting their perfume sweet,  
Ever at beauty's feet,  
Chill'd by cold, scorch'd by heat—  
Cheerful alway.

Let us be gay ! let us be gay !  
Sunshine and smiles, drive the dark clouds away :  
Sadness, and gloom, never would stay  
Were they but greeted with smiles by the gay.

Night *must* pass ! soon again  
Comes the glad morn to reign,  
Breaking through slumber's chain,  
Wak'ning the earth :  
So upon sorrow's gloom,  
Like flowers upon a tomb,  
Glowing with youthful bloom,  
Comes bright-eyed mirth.

---

## GIVE EACH HIS MEED.

THE timid herb that in the valley nestles  
     Secure from ill,  
 Nor dares to raise its head aloft, nor wrestles  
     With heaven's will—  
 Storms passing o'er its drooping form, but render  
     New life and bloom ;  
 Pressing out from its leaves so green and tender  
     Their rich perfume.

But oh ! the stately flower in conscious beauty,  
     That towereth high ;  
 Claiming its meed of praise as but the duty  
     Of passers-by :  
 When storms have been, and pass'd, go seek that  
     flower !

With voices husht,  
 Where dead it lies bereft of bloom, and power,  
     Low in the dust.

But oh ! be pitiful ! it is not given  
     For high and low

Alike, to bear the lights, and shades, from heaven  
 That come and go.  
 The humble soul that 'neath the tempest bendeth  
 Is good, and wise ;  
 But he who in the *dark* with storms contendeth,  
*Dare* we despise ?

---

## HOPE ON ! HOPE EVER !

WHEN thou hast been deceived by friends loved  
 fondest,  
 And faintly round thee echoes love's farewell ;  
 And envy's flame against thee burns the strongest—  
 Hope on ! despair is—hell !

When thou art sad and weary, and thy sorrow  
 Presses upon thee like a cloud of night ;  
 When scarce one ray of joy thy heart can borrow—  
 Hope on ! for dawning light.

When poverty, and mis'ry clasp thee tighter,  
 And beat to earth thy spirit's soaring wing ;

List but this whisper, and thy heart is lighter—  
“Hope on ! hope everything !”

When troubles multiply, and sickness taketh  
Unto itself thy strength and treasured might;  
And sorrow from its trance renew'd awaketh,  
Hope on ! and wait for light.

---

## THE DEATH-WOUND.

LEAVE me alone ! I, like a stricken deer,  
Have sought the deepest shade ;  
And not one torture more the world could give  
Can harm me in this glade.

The world ? A thousand thrusts from that fierce brute  
Could wring from me no cry ;  
But this small venom'd dart aim'd by a friend—  
Of that I die ! I die !

I cannot pluck it out, and hurl it back,  
With scorn, as many might ;

Nor could I bare the wound, and blazon it  
For pity, to full sight.

No ! pride held fast its mantle o'er the wound,  
And hurried me away  
Where not one gleam of sun, one ray of light,  
Could show how prone I lay.

Here, with the barbèd shaft press'd hard within  
My quivering heart's deep core,  
I'll wrestle with the pain I cannot cure,  
Till pain, and life, are o'er.

---

## SERENADE.

THE day is past ! the night is coming !  
And round, and red, the moon doth rise ;  
The stars their mystic dance beginning,  
Troop onward through the azure skies.  
Sleep then belovèd !  
Night all fairest flowers should close ;  
Sleep then belovèd !  
Cold winds chill the opening rose !

Oh ! hasten winds, with gentlest whisper  
Breathe my blessings through her dreams !  
Moonbeams speed and light our future  
With your pure and silv'ry beams.  
Sleep then beloved !  
Night all fairest flowers should close ;  
Sleep then beloved !  
Cold winds chill the opening rose !

Silver streamlet onward dancing,  
Murmur softly in her ear  
That my heart doth hold her image,  
As thy breast the moonlight clear.  
Sleep then beloved !  
Night all fairest flowers should close ;  
Sleep then beloved,  
Cold winds chill the opening rose !

---

## LINES TO —.

Not in thy revelry,  
 When the ruddy wine is flowing  
 To songs of boist'rous mirth,  
 And wand'ring eyes are glowing.  
 Think of all others but not of me !  
 That were a curse at such time to thee.

Not in thine hour of bliss,  
 When the spell of love subdues thee ;  
 And the rapture-madd'ning kiss  
 From rich lips of beauty woos thee—  
 Think not of me ! in an hour like this,  
 Else were there stings in each honied kiss.

Not when the stars of pow'r  
 To scenes of triumph light thee ;  
 And thou hast won thy dow'r  
 'Gainst those who strove to blight thee—  
 Think not of me in thy vict'ry's hour,  
 Else wouldst thou then like a dastard cow'r.

Not when thy pulse beats high  
With joy that's well-nigh madness ;  
Not when thy heart must sigh,  
Or burst, with over-gladness—  
Think not of me ! in thine hour of joy,  
Else were there anguish for its alloy.

Not when peace yieldeth balm,  
And time is gently gliding ;  
Not when the world all calm  
In velvet grooves is sliding—  
Think not of me ! on life's couch of ease,  
Else were there thorns in its heap'd rose-leaves.

But when the tide ebbs low  
Of wealth, and power, and favour ;  
When mirth hath ceased its flow,  
And wine hath lost its savour—  
And those pass thee by who were friends erewhile,  
And love grows too cold to kiss, or to smile—

Then, when thy soul is sad,  
And none are by to cheer thee,

And thou wouldest fain be glad  
As when I once was near thee—  
Think of me then ! thou wilt care to know  
I have forgiven thy work of woe.

---

## THE HEART WITHOUT LOVE.

WHAT is there left to the heart when love dies ?  
That which is left to the cold winter skies  
When the sun sets—glory blazing away  
Till the last spark quench'd out, the blank ashes lie  
gray ;  
Then the torpor of twilight, when anguish-damps  
cling  
To the beauty that *was* ; when the doubt-mist will  
fling  
Over every fair object a possible lie ;  
And the shades will creep closer, as love's last rays  
die :  
And the chills of suspicion damp out every trust,  
And corrode the affections with pitiless rust ;

Then wild creeping things, all unhallow'd, and  
dread,

Will close round, as the vultures wheel close round  
the dead ;

Then, the down-swooping night, with its aching  
void wide,

Only peopled, at best, with the spectres, that pride  
Cannot hinder from torturing—mystery—gloom—  
Then horrible depths of despair—then the tomb.

---

## MAN.

" And God said, Let us make man in our own image."

'TWAS done ! the mighty work creative, which  
Throughout seven days—not of our finite time,  
For time then was not—had been going on  
From small to great ; till at the last of all  
The mighty Worker paused and called it "Good!"  
And there, an atom in the infinite,  
This fair earth, like a glitt'ring jewel lay  
Fetter'd in flow'r-wreaths ; bound as in a mesh

Of silver network by her many streams ;  
A blissful captive waiting for some *one*  
To claim it for a heritage. Outspread,  
The firmament was gemm'd all o'er with stars,  
As was the earth with flow'rs ; and to the sky  
The wondrous harmony of countless birds  
Went thrilling up, tuning the quiv'ring air  
Into a golden lyre. Below, clear founts  
Gush'd forth from fairy dells, and babbled on  
In liquid melody ; and silver streams  
Outvied the sinuous snakes in their wild play  
Beneath the drooping foliage. Luscious fruits,  
Golden and crimson, waited for the breeze  
To cast them at the feet of—whom ? The flowers  
Sent up rich fragrance—wherefore? there were none  
To breathe it in ; the beasts went careless on,  
Nor heeded, though they trampled down whole  
bowers  
Of richest roses. Wherefore sang the birds ?  
The wild rocks heeded not. Why laugh'd the  
streams ?  
The dull trees listen'd not, nor cared. And so  
It seem'd that Nature had attired herself  
In varied raiment, waiting as a bride

Awaits her bridegroom, for some being, who  
Should rule, and use the whole. And then  
God, who did look on all, said, "Let us make  
Man in our own image!" Born of earth  
And heaven behold him ! claiming from the earth  
His body ; but from God Himself his soul !  
Beautiful unity ! which doth keep him poised  
In justest equilibrium—midway 'twixt  
The finite and the infinite, till earth  
Regains her part, and then the spirit soars  
Likewise up to its kind. So perfect man,  
Perfect in every precious gift, was made  
Lord of creation. Then did beasts, and birds,  
And creeping things, and fishes all bow down  
And own him such. And while he walk'd aright  
With his great Father, flowers, and herbs, and  
trees,  
Yielded, unask'd, their treasures up to him ;  
And man was noble on the happy earth,  
And mighty too.—Sin came !  
With ready handmaidens, Disease, Woe, Death !  
And through long ages well-nigh they effaced—  
From the great overwhelming mass of man—  
The image, and the superscription too

Placed there by God, to claim man as His own.  
And now we look abroad upon the earth—  
Steep'd deep in infamy, and compass'd round  
With a foul atmosphere of blackest crime—  
And ask in horror whether these be men,  
These loathsome, bloated reptiles, crawling low  
Amid the slime of foulness. These ; brute beasts—  
Which yet are not *dumb* beasts, for they, alas !  
Shrink back aghast before them—trampling on  
The weak and wretched, crushing out at once  
The life and purity with unclean hoofs,  
And gorging on the bruised, polluted flesh,  
Till they are sated, go with gory hands  
Unwash'd amid their kind.—Or these,—  
These soft, sleek, gentle, oily-speaking things !  
Base hypocrites ! who, aping sanctity  
Writhe in and out, among the good and pure,  
Till, in some dark by-way they spring, and crush  
The trustful victim.—These, again, who stalk  
The earth as victors—in whose track run deep  
Rivers of blood, and famine, pestilence,  
And all such crying miseries—march on  
To horrid din of cries, and groans, and shrieks,  
From miserable woman.—Ay ! these, too,

Contemptible, mean, wretched, aimless things !  
Mere libels on humanity, with nought  
In soul, or heart, or intellect, to claim  
Their title to high manhood ; tott'ring on  
With weak uncertain step, the same cramp'd round  
Some dead ancestor plann'd long ages past ;  
Ever with heart, and head, bow'd low to scan  
The clod, whence comes the food they batten on.  
And these, poor brainless atoms ! mincing by,  
Half owl, half monkey, chatt'ring, muttering,  
Lisp'ing, perfumed, bejewell'd specimens  
Of self-made idiots ; frisking, like paid fools,  
—Minus the cap and bells—upon the stage  
Of sombre life, scorn'd by high souls, with scorn  
That would annihilate, did it not burn  
In redness out ere it can reach so low.  
Are any of these, *men* ? blood-guilty ! vile !  
Grovellers ! delvers ! suicides of souls !  
Murderers of every noble deed thereof !  
No ! by all goodness ! No ! say what you will—  
Own such as brethren ; say “ they still have souls ; ”  
“ Are flesh of our flesh,”—“ born of woman,”—“ all  
Hurrying on to the grave where all must lie  
At last as equals.” They're not men ! not men !

They've forfeited their title to such name !  
The image given is gone ! planed out ! nay ! more,—  
They've scrawl'd another there. We are *not* one,  
And equal, in the grave. God looking down  
Noteth too well the holy from the vile,—  
E'en though they fill one grave—to let that be.  
Vile, dying vile, is such ; and holiness—  
E'en in the grave—is such ; and 'twixt the two,  
There is, can be, no unity. The dust  
Of good and evil parts again, as must  
Antagonistic natures forced to one—  
Thus far but of the bad ! But turn we now,  
With thrilling hearts, and ponder o'er, what yet  
By inference above is fully owned—  
On man, as *man*; God's best, most perfect work ;  
The being, form'd a little yet below  
The angels, lifted up by God in flesh  
To take his stand in ages yet to come  
Far, very far, above them. Oh ! on earth  
What mighty men have been !—Are now ! What  
deeds—  
Swelling the song of praise, that Fame doth sing  
Eternal through the corridors of Time,  
And noted down by willing angel hands

In heaven's broad records—Man, God help'd,  
Has done ! be witnesses ye names  
Which in all grateful hearts are noted down,  
And in Fame's temple blazon'd. Witness too  
The monster arts and sciences push'd on  
Year after year, by fast succeeding minds  
Of mighty compass. See ! the sun, the moon,  
The outspread firmament ; the inmost earth,  
Scann'd, read, summ'd up and weighed.  
The ocean's treasures pilfer'd ; the deep rocks  
Torn up and analyzed ; the mountain top  
Scaled fearlessly ; the deepest depths explored ;  
The lightning drawn from heaven, at man's will,  
And—like a myth it sounds—made man's swift  
slave.

Useless to numerate ! suffice it here  
To own how less than nothing were this world  
Without such men as these—  
The good, the true, the noble, strong of heart,  
The noble souls ! that like a diamond-belt  
Compass the earth, and light it on through space.—  
Some men call women weak of heart and head,  
Fickle, inconstant, all incapable  
Of great, and noble works ; but, look to it !

The fault lies with yourselves. Why are they so ?  
As a great rule because that men are not  
What they should be. Why how can woman be  
Constant to the inconstant? How love well  
The worthless? Show forth but a noble soul,  
And at the same time you will show a host  
Of women are his worshippers ; which proves  
They can appreciate, and love, the great,  
Even when lacking power to comprehend.  
Oh, man ! Oh, man ! if you would bow the soul  
Of woman to your feet, and make her all  
You wish for most—if you would have her give  
Herself, her happiness, her purest love  
Into your keeping—if you'd have her take  
Her own heart up and drop it deep in yours—  
Live for your happiness—forget herself—  
Hang on your words—obey—submit—be all  
Fond tenderness ; yield up her very life  
To spare your own—then, worthy make yourself  
Of such a sacrifice. This to the mass,  
For there are men who merit all of this,  
And women glorying in yielding it.  
Yes ! there are thousands walking all abroad  
With true strong hearts ; with intellects, and souls

Of unstain'd purity, that claim, and have,  
The loudest praise ; and woman gladly owns  
What has been said—that every virtue takes  
A stronger growth, in fact, is *perfected*  
Highest in man. 'Tis such an one who keeps  
The image and the superscription plain,  
And bright, that those who pass him by may see,  
And recognize his worth ; who still has kept  
That unaffected dignity of soul  
Given but of God—'tis such an one *alone*  
Should dare to claim, and have awarded him,  
As his by right, in its first dignity,  
And fullest sense—the noble name of *man*.

---

## WOMAN.

NAY ! never speak disdainfully, young man !  
Of woman. Hold you still ! for older heads  
To praise or blame ; and if a sneer, or taunt  
Rise to your lips, think, ere 'tis wingèd forth,  
Of mother, love, or sister ! Hold you still !

It augurs ill when beardless boys begin  
To babble little spiteful, slighting things  
Of woman. Hold you still ! till time shall turn  
The down upon your lip to ripen'd growth,  
Then may you judge more wisely. Why condemn  
All, for the few ? The simplest mind, unskill'd  
In argument, or reasoning, must see  
*That* is unjust. One thistle does not make  
A field a waste : nor do a hundred waste  
And barren places, yielding briar, and thorn,  
That scar our country, cause it to be called  
A sterile wilderness ; for myriad vales,  
Fair and productive, teeming with rich grain  
And fruits, redeem it. One cold biting day  
Makes not fair springtide winter. One poor flower  
Wither'd and mildew'd, rotten at the core,  
Condemns not all the plant. One little fruit—  
For lack of sun, and light—both sour'd and dwarf'd,  
Makes not the whole crop useless. One small  
bough,  
Stricken and blasted, renders not the tree  
Hateful to look on. True ! Eve sinn'd the first.  
But wherefore ?—She was left alone ! Her lord  
Wander'd afar 'mid flowers, forgetful of

The tender charge he should have kept in view :  
Left her exposed—is it not often so ?—  
To dire temptation. Had his stronger sense  
Been there to guide, his stronger arm to save,  
She had not fail'd. One, in body and soul,  
Together, they had foil'd the tempter's pow'r,  
And he abash'd had fled. Apart, each lost  
The other half of strength ; Eve's fail'd the first,  
Then Adam's follow'd—Eve had never been  
Man's tempter, nor the devil had been hers,  
Successfully, had Adam kept his trust,  
Nor wander'd from the gentle, clinging wife  
He knew could not sustain herself alone  
Against aught mighty. Women, mostly, still  
Err from real feebleness ; while others stand  
Long time and battle hopefully with sin,  
Then fall from weariness : and many more  
Fall from great ignorance ; nay ! do not fall,  
They wander but a little farther on  
Amid the gloom, to deeper, blacker mire,  
Nor see the difference : how can they ? these  
First open'd eyes on blackness, and it was  
For evermore their light. 'Tis only those  
Living 'mid pure white light, and breathing in

The sweet, fresh atmosphere of heaven, that see  
What foulness, and what gloom, spreads down  
below ;  
And what is purity, and how between  
There is no gulf ; but long, steep, slipp'ry ways  
Adown which glide the wilful, or the weak ;  
Nor know they glide, till falling prone they feel  
The foul mire daubing out the relics left  
Of what was woman. Pity ! pity them !  
Yes ! these ask pity dumbly, by their own  
Pure ignorance in needing it. But you,  
You hold yourselves the stronger, nobler sex,  
Lords of creation ! Even so ! what then ?  
What should the nobler do but elevate,  
By force of eloquence, example, all  
That nobleness can do—the ignoble ?  
What should nobility and strength both do ?  
Fight for the weak ; bear up their feebleness.  
What should lords do ? you noble lords, and  
strong ?  
Redress the grievances of serfs, and take  
The weak and the oppress'd beneath your care,  
And, never heeding either birth, or age,  
Treat them as friends and sisters—tenderly.

And counsell'd, guided, strengthen'd by your strength,

Who knows what they might be?—

We know the many err; the few sin deep;

And leave on woman's name a stain so black

That though for evermore high purity

Should weep, ay, tears of blood, its hideousness

Could never be blurr'd out. Condemn

These as you will; for us we cannot judge

Our sisters, for alas! they're sisters still.—

But pass we on! to think and speak of now

'The mass of womankind who walk, and act,

As mothers, wives, and sisters through the land;

And specially do form the centres of

Our "Happy English Homes." Oh, look at them!

Taken at large, the best and purest wives,

And mothers in the world. But widen yet

The circle of your ken; take the great world,

And tell us, who 'tis in obscurity—

Nor seeking, nor requiring e'en just praise,—

That rear the nations yet to be, and teach

The future great man's infant tongue to lisp

His baby wants into God's willing ear?

Who strives to mould the baby heart while yet  
'Tis warm, and malleable, to form, and train ?  
Firing it first with love of everything  
That maketh good and noble. Who points out  
The glowing beacon-lights that stand aloft—  
Amid the shoals and sunken rocks of life—  
To steer man's course by? Who, thus gradually  
Uplifts a standard for the infant mind  
To work and hold to? Woman 'tis who rears  
Thus with fond tears and prayers the men who  
make  
The world resound their fame. But, woe to her !  
Woman must rear as carefully the sons  
Who in their full-grown strength look down and say  
" You are our slave, inferior, stand back !  
And henceforth know your place." What is that  
place ?  
Women are watchers by the sad death-bed ;  
Prayerful, unwearied ; waiting with tired eyes,  
That yet forget to slumber, till the oil  
Dries slowly from the lamp of life, and down  
Sinks the pale flame for ever. They are found  
Wherever crime, or mis'ry, death or doom,  
Mutely demand their energies. They faint

Or shriek at silly things in days of mirth ;  
But in the hour of need they soon forget  
Their feebleness, and timidness, and fright,  
And bear up burdens stouter shoulders drop ;  
Nor faint, nor weary, nor upbraid, nor scold.  
They have been very faithful ; following far  
The one beloved through exile, infamy,  
To cheer and tend him ; thinking themselves paid  
By but a glance of kindness, word of love,  
Or smile of gratitude : for very strong  
The love of women makes them.—There is not  
One circumstance of life, be it of joy  
Or woe, wherein they have not borne a part.  
Go ! search the page of history — it teems  
With records of their deeds, done all for love  
Of one, or many, country, or their God !—  
Women go on with garments undefiled,  
Amid the foulest ways, to nurse, and tend,  
And raise the poor and wretched. Give ! oh ! give !  
Their meed of praise to women such as these,  
Though they nor heed, nor seek it, but look up  
With pure, mild eyes, to heaven, to catch fresh  
gleams  
Of light and love, to guide them on their way.

And when at last their labour's o'er, they fold  
Their pale, meek hands above their pulseless hearts,  
And wait for their reward.—Ah ! sneer at them,  
Some few weak youths, if so it is your will—  
But men, good men do know and recognize  
The worth of woman, and acknowledge her  
In all that elevates the heart, at least,  
Their equal : and in truth ! there are but few  
True women, who would needlessly contend  
For bare equality in aught besides.—  
Thus much then for the sake of women, who  
In their worst types must yet demand respect,  
Since the dear Son of God did not disdain  
To call a *Woman* “ Mother ! ”

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## THE CAPTIVE SET FREE.

FREE ! to career o'er the wide world so fair !  
To the ripple, and curl of the boundless air ;  
To theplash of the fountain ; the triumph song  
Of the river flood rushing madly on.

Free ! to uplift to heaven's broad face  
Brow that was branded with sign of disgrace ;  
Cheeks that were haggard, and back that was bent ;  
Eyes that were blinded and soul that was spent ;  
Form that was made in the likeness of God  
Under the feet of earth's vilest trod.

Free ! from the scourging, free ! from the bard,  
'Scaped from the shackles, 'scaped from the wand.  
Out ! from the blackness of dungeon-like tomb,  
Egyptian darkness ; horrors of gloom ;  
Into the light, and the sunshine, and strife,  
Keeping, and sweet'ning the waters of life.

Out ! from the ghastly stagnation, where death  
Revels, and feasts on pollution's foul breath ;  
Into the ebbing and flowing, birth-rife ;  
Into the turmoil that quickeneth life.

Death ! to the darkness escaped from ; afar  
Bursts out in splendour freedom's bright star.  
Shine to the waking ! shine through the night !  
Strike to the heart's core arrows of light !

Shiver thy dart-rays into the soul !  
Lighting its depths as a crystalline bowl.  
Dance to the wild wind dungeon-clamn'd hair !  
Wile the red sunbeams into thy snare !

Bathe in the floodlight sinew and thew !  
Cramp'd and distorted, bathe ! and renew  
Strength long departed, vigour long fled ;  
Slough off the past as a membrane now dead.  
On ! to the well-depths ; slake throat, and tongue,  
Swoll'n black, and burning, and agony-wrung.  
Plunge in the mad sea ! ride on the wave !  
Dust-stain and mud-soil, all it will lave.  
Toy with its spray-wreaths ! snatch its proud crest !  
Let its white foam-bells hang on thy breast !  
Laugh with its wavelets ! and shout to its tone—  
“ Ocean ! my freedom is wide as thine own ! ”

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## THE VISION OF THE SEA.

I WAS weary ! I was weary !  
For my heart was full of care,  
And the scenes which once could cheer me,  
Through the mists of grief look'd dreary,  
Ah ! look'd dreary, cold, and bare.

I had caught, upon life's river,  
Many an arrow glancing bright,  
Joy hurl'd reckless from full quiver.  
"Now," I sigh'd, "they break and shiver  
Long before they meet my sight."

I had pluck'd full many a flow'r  
Opening to morn's golden air ;  
Flow'rs that bloom'd round pleasure's bow'r  
Gifted with a witching dow'r.  
"Now," I sighed, "they look not fair."

And the melody entrancing  
Through the flow'r-wreath'd earth that steals,  
Songs like arrows, quiv'ring, glancing—  
Roundelays for nature's dancing—  
Sounded now like muffled peals.

Weakly craving grief's relenting,  
Aimless, on I stray'd alone  
Where the sea, too late repenting,  
O'er its buried dead lamenting,  
Sought them with unceasing moan.

"Sea!" I cried, "my heart is yearning  
From this cruel world to flee;  
Treach'rous hope and life 'tis spurning,  
From thy breast there's no returning—  
Fold me to it, soothing sea!"

Then, a thousand waves upspringing,  
Thunder'd loudly in my ear,  
Dashing madly, wreathing, clinging;  
Choking foam and spray-clouds flinging,  
Till I shrank aghast with fear.

And there came its voice of thunder—  
"Mortal! on my bosom bare  
There are thousands lull'd in slumber;  
Ere thou swell'st the goodly number  
See them! as they're pillow'd there."

Backward, like a spring rebounding,  
Roll'd the vestments of the sea;  
Till afar, its waves resounding,  
Mighty bulwarks heavenward founding,  
Left its ghastly bosom free.

Powers of mercy ! was I dreaming ?—  
No ! I saw with waking sight  
Full a thousand corpses streaming,  
Stark, and stiff, with sea-pearls gleaming  
Where long since their eyes drank light.

Hush'd, and safe, in death's cold keeping,  
Though their fetters were but sand ;  
O'er them scentless sea-flowers weeping,  
Round them tangled sea-plants creeping,  
Lay the slowly wasting band.

'Mid the dank weeds there were others  
Piled in rotting masses there :  
Friend and foe lay close as brothers ;  
Spoil'd and spoiler clasp'd like lovers ;  
Joy lay mated with despair.

Heaps of clammy bones were lying  
Torn and sever'd, scatter'd wide ;  
Link from link that chain was lying,  
Life's pale fingers loose in dying,  
And death's touch the clasps divide.



Where the streaming seaweed floated,  
Black and matted, thick and rank ;  
Foul corruption, gross and bloated,  
O'er its mould'ring victims gloated,  
Ere again to dust they sank.

One man clutch'd the gold which lost him ;  
Other fleshless fingers prest  
Round the goblet life had cost him ;  
One, though many a wave had toss'd him,  
Clasp'd a rude cross to his breast.

Here was one whose curse was spoken  
When the waves choked back his breath ;  
In his breast a spear was broken,  
Rusting deep, hate's parting token  
From the armoury of death.

One, a coral grove waved o'er her,  
Glowing branches, arching wide ;  
Little rocking wavelets bore her,  
Silver spray-flowers droop'd before her ;  
Round her music seem'd to glide.

Golden sands her heaving pillow,  
While upon her silken hair  
Gems were cast from many a bellow.  
O'er her form, once like as willow,  
Cluster'd every sea-gem rare.

Calm her meek brow ; sweet and tender  
Round the mute lips love still gleam'd ;  
While her arms, so fair and slender,  
Clasp'd her babe, as to defend her  
From the ills of which she dream'd.

Suddenly the moon, down-gliding,  
Quench'd her blue torch in the wave ;  
And the stars, their bright cars guiding,  
Shudd'ring pass'd, all glory hiding ;  
And the billows ceased to rave.

Darkness brooded o'er me, round me,  
Horrid fear I could not quell  
Like a coiling serpent bound me,  
And despair's cold anguish found me  
Shudd'ring o'er hope's parting knell.

For a flaming spirit flutter'd  
O'er those corpses scatter'd wide,  
Words of quick'ning import utter'd,  
And the sleepers woke and mutter'd ;  
Fleshless bosoms heaved, and sigh'd.

Know'st thou how the north wind winging  
O'er the wintry woods its way  
Wakes them with its mighty singing,  
Bids them join with chorus ringing,  
And, they know not why, obey ?

So they woke, those ocean sleepers.  
As the troubling words swept by ;  
Woke as waken weary weepers  
Starting from their ghostly keepers  
With full many a gasping sigh.

Pale blue lights glanced round them, o'er them,  
As they moved, a ghastly band ;  
Spell-bound there I stood before them.  
As their dry bones onward bore them,  
Beckon'd each with fleshless hand.

Only two of all I number'd  
Were not startled from their rest ;  
Only two still calmly slumber'd—  
She, whose arms the babe still cumber'd ;  
He, whose breast the cross still prest.

As they nearer came, and nearer,  
Closer binding me around,  
Wilder yet they looked, and weirder,  
And their mutt'ring, growing clearer !  
Shaped itself to words and sound.

“ Come ! ” they cried, their gaunt arms waving,  
“ Come ! and leave the tyrant world,  
Ever taking, ever craving,  
Ever loudest in its raving  
'Gainst the one that's lowest hurl'd.

“ Spurn the tyrant ! quit the thraldom  
Of the life thou'rt made to wear !  
Hurl it from thee ! with its burdens,  
Far too great to meekly bear.

“ Craven-hearted ! they who stumble  
Through the world with want and pain ;  
Scoff’d and sneer’d at ; spurn’d and trampled,  
Yet too weak to break the chain.

“ What is life, that thou shouldst bear it ?  
One long list of want and woe,  
Never asked for ; forced upon thee ;  
Hurl it from thee ! let it go !

“ Come to us ! we’ll show you wonders  
Here, where hope nor love deceive.  
Come ; a thousand joys await thee ;  
Come ! who for thy loss will grieve ?

“ Oh ! we spend a merry time here !  
With the mermaids in their caves,  
Dancing nightly at our revels  
To the music of the waves.

“ Oh ! we spend a merry time here !  
With the ocean king and queen.  
When we hold our maddest feastings  
Thousand brilliant pearl-lamps gleam.

"Come!" they cried, and closer press'd me,  
Stretching wide their clammy hands,  
Nearer, till they 'most caress'd me ;  
And the deadly spell possess'd me,  
Madly though I tore its bands.

Suddenly the gentle sleeper  
Rose, and nearer came in view.  
Like as corn before a reaper,  
Trembling, crouching, muttering deeper,  
Backward shrank that hideous crew.

"Back!" she cried, in accents pleading,  
"Back! to life, misguided one!  
Is there nothing worth the winning  
On the earth, beneath the sun?

"Back! amid fond friends, and faithful  
Loving hearts, and good and kind.  
Back! and learn the sweet communion  
Of a kindred heart and mind.

"Is there nothing worth the doing  
In the wide world all around?"

Feed the hungry ! clothe the naked !  
Seek the lost ! and house the found !

“ Bind the bleeding feet ! that trample  
O’er the rugged ways of life ;  
Heal the bruised hearts half deaden’d  
’Neath the bitter blows of strife.”

Ceased her voice so soft and tender ;  
All her face love’s halo caught,  
While her arms, so fair and slender,  
Press’d her babe as to defend her—  
Then her seaweed bed she sought.

Once again the wild crew muster’d  
Courage to prolong the strife ;  
Once again they round me cluster’d,  
Laugh’d, and jeer’d, and taunted, bluster’d ;  
All their words with tempting rife.

And a madd’ning influence seized me,  
Moved my pulses, fired my brain :  
More and more their tempting pleased me,  
Less and less their jibing teased me :  
Life seemed nought and death sweet gain.

“ Come ! ” they cried, and closer press’d me,  
Stretching wide their clammy hands,  
Nearer, till they ’most caress’d me.  
Stronger then the wish possess’d me  
To escape life’s clinging bands.

Ah ! for life seem’d to encumber ;  
Not a care that band possest.—  
On I dash’d, to swell their number,  
When uprose from peaceful slumber  
He whose heart the rude cross prest.

“ Back ! ” he cried, in words entreating,  
Life hath brighter days for thee.  
Rush not thus to death’s cold greeting !  
See ! these wretched tempters flee.

“ Hence ye fiends ! hold hence your revels !  
Foul not earth with deeds of hell !  
Hence ! and work your will with devils !  
See this cross ! and feel its spell !

“ Hence ! by this most sacred token,  
By Christ’s triumph o’er the grave !

By His holiness unspoken !  
By His power to doom, or save !”

Oh ! the terror that subdued them,  
That foul crew, as far they fled ;  
Back, as if fierce flames pursued them,  
Far and farther still they sped.

Holding still the cross uplifted,  
Spake to me that holy one—  
“ Art thou then so poorly gifted  
That thou canst not see the sun ?

“ What though clouds obscure its brightness !  
Only do they wrap the earth ;  
Hope should tinge them with its lightness,  
Faith should pierce them with its worth.

“ Listen ! to the voice of duty,  
That will guide thee on thy way,  
That will show thee paths of beauty  
Where 'tis happiness to stray.

“ Does that way look dark and dreary ?  
Is it set with perils round ?

Other feet, than thine more weary,  
Bleeding, press'd that rocky ground.

“ Shall He then have suffer'd vainly ?  
All in vain have died for you ?  
Scan the wondrous lesson plainly,  
Prove His love, and find it true.”

Ceased that voice so made for guiding,  
And again he sank to rest.  
Then the heap'd-up sea, down-gliding,  
Gently fell, the sleepers hiding,  
Closely to its bosom prest ;  
And I feel 'twill be abiding,  
This life-purpose in my breast.

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## THE OLD YEAR'S DEATH.

THERE cometh a traveller over the waste,  
With trembling limbs, and tottering gait,  
On, to the ocean, within whose depths  
The past and the present wait ;  
    Silent and cold,  
    Till his days are told,  
And he comes to them, they wait.

We watch'd him an infant at sport 'mid flow'rs,  
Through petulant youth to full-grown prime ;  
Saw the mellow tinges of autumn days  
In all exquisite hues combine,  
    And lend their grace  
    For a fleeting space,  
Then dull into age's rime.

A pilgrim father he traversed the earth,  
Hour after hour, and day after day ;

But a dimpled babe when he first began,  
And now his beard is gray ;  
And his head bends low,  
And his step lags slow,  
Yet alas ! he dares not stay !

There's a weary look in his half-closed eye ;  
And the cold wind tosses his tangled hair,  
And the tears of weakness drop o'er his cheeks,  
And freeze in the furrows there ;  
And as 'twere a vice,  
His hand of ice  
A mighty scroll doth bear,

Fair and unwrit when his race began,  
And now not a corner is blank of the whole ;  
'Tis a record of all he has seen on his way,  
And he yieldeth it up at the goal :  
Oh ! the sighs and tears !  
Oh ! the hopes and fears !  
God be our help when we hear that scroll !

Twelve were his children, and all of them,  
With their children's children, have waned apace ;

All save one they have sicken'd and died,  
And he and his sire are the last of their race ;  
With the one's last sigh  
Must the other die,  
And a year quite as fruitful will take its place.

But the shadows grow deep in the vale beneath,  
And the river creeps on in its mist-wreath cold,  
And a crimson flame to the sky shoots up  
From the hills yet fringed with gold ;  
And that weary man  
Grows deadly wan,  
For his days are nearly told.

Now comes darkness ! and over the moor,  
Blinded with snowflakes, he wanders afar,  
Where with holly, and mistletoe, ivy, and yew,  
They are decking a funeral car.  
And he hoarsely sighs,  
And the wind replies—  
“ Friends of thy youth these are.”

One long, low cry, and he falleth prone,  
And the startled watchers hurry near,

And raise him up with tender hands,

And place him on his bier.

Their pitying moan

Blends with the groan

Of the old, the dying year.

And cold, and faint, in his car of state,

They bear him on through the waste so dim,

Four cowled hours and their retinue

Swell out his requiem ;

And the measured beat

Of their many feet

Keep time to the mournful hymn.

They are nearing the banks of that tideless deep,

And one by one, with muffled tread,

The cowled hours and their progeny

Have all forsook him and fled.

One second more—

Now all is o'er,

The old year lieth dead !

And a long, low sigh creeps over the earth,

And his passing-bell swings to the wind,

And the year is launch'd to eternity,  
And nothing is left behind ;  
But the waves throw back  
From the lost one's track  
The wreaths that on earth were twined.

Hush ! let us mourn him a little space !  
While his passing-bell is heavily swung ;  
For a thousand hopes have died with him  
That budded when he was young.  
And that record of sin  
He bears with him !  
Ah ! well may our hearts be wrung !

But see ! through the darkness a shooting-star !  
And back o'er the waste so wild and drear,  
With mantle of darkness, and wings of night,  
Retreats the storm with fear.  
Go ! frown in shade  
Where the dead one's laid ;  
For the glad new year is here !

And earth's mighty heart throbs full again,  
And her breath comes free o'er mount and plain ;

For another link has been safely clench'd  
To her time-upholden chain.  
Ring, joy-bells, ring !  
Sing, glad heart, sing !  
To greet' the New Year's reign.

## SONGS OF THE SOUL.

## NO I.—DEATH'S PORTAL.

CLOTHED in humility, a soul lies low,  
Before death's portal unresistingly ;  
Captive of sickness ; weary, faint, and husht.  
With folded wings ; and dimm'd, and ruffled  
plumes ;  
And clammy dews ; and thick, and labour'd breath.  
Lies calm, and low, within the brooding gloom ;  
Nor strives, nor prays to rise ; nor doubts, nor  
fears ;  
Because she feels herself secure, and safe,  
Leash'd safely to a loving Father's Hand.  
So, when the days shall be accomplished  
Of her humiliation, like a dove,  
Loosen'd, and freed, by this same tender Hand,  
She shall mount up with messages of love  
Bound round her neck, with pinions newly dyed  
In hope's bright rainbow ; mount, and float above

The troubled waters of life's restless sea ;  
Alighting now upon a barren rock,  
Or on a sunny isle as heretofore.  
But, if it be her Father's will that she  
Stoop lower still to pass that gloomy port,  
What then ? Oh ! wherefore tremble, sinking frame !  
Slumber, and rest, within the earth's soft breast,  
Through wintry days ; and when the spring-time  
comes—  
The world's awakening—then thou must rise,  
Freed from encumb'ring clay, and quiv'ring through  
With joy that cannot 'minish, or wax cool ;  
With love that cannot wane ; with praise to swell  
From high to highest—but to flutter down  
(Drawn there by love), at thy great Maker's feet,  
Beneath His smile to live for evermore.

## NO. II.—GIVEN BACK TO LIFE.

I lay a-dying ! life with its delight,  
Was gently stealing from me far away,  
Leaving the harsh, and cold, to mark its flight,  
As shaken blossoms leave the thorny spray.

Farther, and farther off, the busy world  
Roll'd swiftly down th' infinity of space ;  
While all its noise, and din, like streamlets purl'd,  
Or sweet sphere-music, measuring its race.

By some resistless magnet drawn on high,  
I floated, gently couch'd on angels' wings ;  
And, by a keener vision than the eye,  
I look'd far down on earth, and earthly things.

Beloved ones knelt in anguish round my bed,  
And faintly up to me rose sob, and sigh ;  
As if a harp, whence melody had fled,  
Thrill'd through its shatter'd strings, as winds  
swept by.

Onward ! through mists cold gray, through space  
unspann'd  
I went, life's fever cooling in death's tide ;  
And crowding shadows from the spectral land  
Closely encompass'd me on every side.

Heavy the labouring of the fleeting breath—  
Fainter the beat of pulses and of heart—

Duller the agony—the chill of death  
Quenching each gnawing pain and passion-smart.

Colder, and colder ! — Darkness ! — Silence ! —  
Death ! —

Nay ! — what is this slow curdling through each  
vein ?

What is this *something* lifted from my breath ?  
And giving back the light, and warmth again.

Oh God ! 'tis life ! — I shudder as I wake.  
Has then the calm death-dream for this time fled ?  
Must I—just where it fell—my task retake ?  
And labour on with soul, and heart, and head ?

Oh ! I did long to die so ! must I live ?  
'Twas so delicious that sweet rest from thought !  
Ah ! help me, God ! to love what Thou dost give !  
To cherish what comes back to me unsought !

It *must* be good, since given again from Thee,  
Proving there's work for me to do here still.  
Oh ! help me in all joy, all misery ;  
In life, in death, to do Thy perfect will !

## NO. III.—A PRAYER.

Father ! all faint and low  
My spirit bows itself before Thee here ;  
Too cold to love Thee, and too dull to fear ;  
Stunn'd by a weight of woe.

Sick unto death I come !  
Far I have wander'd from the glorious light ;  
Deeper, and darker fall the shades of night ;  
Oh ! take thy wand'rer home !

Far on the rocky way,  
My hands and feet the cruel thorns have torn ;  
My brow, the beating of the storm has borne,  
The heat of fierce noon-day.

And ever at my side  
The tempter held his place ; with sneer or smile,  
Urging to open sin, or subtle guile,  
And I—cared not to chide.

Loosed for a little space  
From his dark presence, Father ! hear Thy child !

While yet this tempted heart, so dark, so wild,  
Can cry to Thee for grace.

Thou, Thou dost know alone  
Its storms of passion, and its depths of sin,  
The frail, worn barriers that scarce keep them in ;  
Its ceaseless inward moan.

Take back this fleeting breath !  
Take it, oh God ! my spirit yearns for rest,  
And Thou alone canst calm my troubled breast,  
Thou, and Thine angel—Death.

Oh that my days were o'er !  
That I might enter where nor frowns, nor sneers,  
Nor gloom falls ever ; where the mourner's tears  
Shall flow again no more.

Father ! the life once given  
I pray Thee take again !—Oh ! God ! forgive !  
This passionate desire to die, and bid me live  
Thine own, with Thee in heaven !

## NO. IV.—A PRAYER.

Oh ! God ! I am so infinitely weak !

My spirit cowers

Low'mid the earth-clods, crush'd too much to seek

E'en there for flowers ;

Trembling beneath the ruin tempests wreak,

And thunder-showers.

Oh God ! my coward heart doth shrink and quail

Beneath this woe,

As if some pitiless hard hand of mail

Dealt blow on blow ;

And squeezed, and wrung it out, till so doth fail

Its tide to flow.

God ! Thou canst hear my agonized heart-cry,

Though it nor thrills

Unto the fertile valleys for reply,

Nor towering hills.

Though it upon my blanchèd lips should die,

Thine ear it fills.

My spirit writhes in pain ! dost Thou not heed

My agony ?

'Tis said, "Thou wilt not break the bruised reed ;"

    Oh ! draw me nigh !

Thou, whose torn wounds for me did gape and bleed,

    Thou who didst die.

Raise me a little, Lord ! above this din,

    To kiss Thy feet :

Those blessed feet, that crush'd and trampled sin

    Through hell's fierce heat ;

Leading the way from earth, to heaven, within

    The Mercy-seat.

Let me crouch there, dear Saviour ! shelter me !

    I faint ! I die !

From my pursuing foes I hither flee,

    And they are nigh.

Oh Love Incarnate ! thus I cling to Thee !

    Heed ! heed ! my cry !

#### NO. V.

Soar up, oh soul ! thou wert not made to languish

    Here, 'mid the slough and slime of passions dead ;

Even the poignancy of this thine anguish

    Spurs thee to mount what way thy hopes have fled.

Kindle again the quench'd fires of thine altar !

Floods of salt tears have left their ashes cold ;  
Swell high the choral hymns ! that now but falter,  
Dare the glad ecstasy ! as once of old.

Up ! shake thy fetters loose, they are but seeming,  
These dazzling snares that hold thee half-content.  
Nourish the throbbing life with which thou'rt  
teeming !

Till it shall work the end for which 'tis lent.

Heed but the rustling plumes ! thy wings are  
growing

Lusty, and strong, to bear thee from this strife,  
Where the full flood-light evermore is throwing  
Life, life eternal ! from the source of Life !

NO. VI.

When the fires of youth burn low  
O'er the ashes of their pride ;  
And the flick'ring flames but show  
The founts of pleasure dried—

When the singing birds of joy  
Flutter past with drooping wing,  
And with startled looks and coy,  
Cease to warble, cease to sing—

When care lays wrinkled hand  
On thy pillow, and thy board ;  
And poverty makes stand  
By thy scant and shrunken hoard—

When travail of thy soul  
Strains the silver cord of life ;  
And the bowl, the golden bowl  
Is shatter'd in the strife—

Where is thy hope then ? Where ?  
With the earth, all earthly dies ;  
And the shades of things that were  
Mutely mock our yearning cries.

Where is thy hope ? what rock ?  
What shelter spreads above ?  
What rest from tempests' shock ?—  
Only love—Eternal Love !

## NO. VII.—TO MY SOUL.

What hast thou done, oh soul !

Of thy primal duty ?

Why, like a shrivell'd scroll,

Fades and fails thy beauty ?

Where is the lustre beaming through all night,

Steadfast and pure, that mark'd thee born of light ?

Where are thy snowy wings ?

*These* have the taint of mire ;

Where is the flame that springs

From Heaven's altar-fire ?

Quench'd ; and thy crystal orb, all dull and cold,

Nought but grey, lifeless ashes now doth hold.

Where is the fragrant balm

Of thy incense wending ?

Where is the budding palm

Thy care was tending ?

Where the gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to  
bring,

And cast them at His feet, who is thy King ?

Where are thy robes of white,  
Stainless from spot or speck ?  
Where are the 'broid'ries bright,  
Binding thy brow and neck ?  
Where is the threefold cord that girdled thee—  
Love, faith, and hope—and holding, left thee  
free ?

Ah ! dost thou know thy loss ?  
And cower, and crouch so low ?  
Spurning the cumb'ring dross  
That holds thee captive so.  
Lie in the dust awhile, and feel the night—  
Which broods for aye o'er perish'd heirs of light.

Ah ! dost thou mourn thy loss  
In penitential pain ?  
Here 'neath the shel'tring cross  
None plead in vain.  
Dark, cold, and sin-soiled, crush'd, He waits to  
give  
All that thou wantest most, and bid thee live.

*Then from the dark arise,*  
And hold thy way  
Straight through the nether skies,  
On to the day ;  
And when earth's shadow from thy face shall roll,  
Shine forth full-orbed in heaven, a *perfect* soul.

## L'ENVOI.

Go forth!—

Thoughts that have fall'n from my soul in its upward flight,

As the shooting stars strike down from the orbs of light.

Go forth!—

Songs that have broken unwill'd from lips that must sing,

As the startled echoes are roused where the joy-bells ring.

Go forth!—

Lays that were struck from the heart by blow upon blow,

As the sparks from the smitten iron at white-heat glow.

Go forth!—

Drop in some darken'd spot with a kindling light,

Which but for this broken beam were a changeless night.

Go forth !—

Break on the anguish-hush of some tideless woe ;  
Trouble its stagnant depths till the sweet tears  
flow.

Go forth !—

Blend with all cries of the heart an according  
tone ;

For the soul of the poet doth make all sorrow and  
joy his own.

Blend with the pipings of peace ; the harpings of  
struggle, and care ;

The first flute-notes of love ; the silence of blank  
despair ;

The dull drum-roll of war, and the clarion-blast of  
fame ;

The choral of joy ; and the thrill of ecstasy, wanting  
fit name :

With the feeble birth-wail, down to the burden of  
life laid low,

Gasping its final sob on the bosom of death—now  
go !

Go forth !

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